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ASPERSIONS ANSWERED:

AN EXPLANATORY

STATEMENT,

ADDRESSED

TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE,

AND

TO EVERY READER OF

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

IN PARTICULAR.

BY WILLIAM HONE.

Truth will ultimately prevail, even though he who uttered it should
be destroyed.

Dr. Vicesimus Knox.

FIFTH EDITION.

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TO THE READER.

THIS was advertised as a shilling pamphlet, and I wish I could as easily have kept down the size as the price. It has been written with painful feelings, at sundry times, and under unfavourable circumstances. But I may say, with one of our elder writers, that "An innocent man needs no eloquence: his innocence is instead of it; else I had never come off from these precipices whither men's malice hath pursued me. It is true I have been accused, and by great ones; but it happened my accusers had not thought of the accusation with themselves, and so were driven, for want of crimes, to use invention, which was found slander; or, too late, being entered so far, to seek starting-holes for their own rashness, which were not given them. And then they may think what accusation that was like to prove, when they that were the engineers feared to be the authors. Nor were they content to feign things against me, but to urge things feigned by the ignorant; which, though, from their hired and mercenary impudence, I might have passed by, yet I durst not leave myself undefended, having a pair of ears unskilful to hear lies, or have those things said of me, which I could truly prove of them. Nay, they would offer to urge mine own writings against me; but by pieces, which was an excellent way of malice, as if any man's

context might not seem dangerous and offensive, if that which was knit to what went before, might not seem subject to calumny, which read entire would appear most free." Jonson's words express my reasons, and constitute my apology, for the matter and manner of the tract.

A notion prevails with many that I am usually engaged in preparing something or other for the press, and few are persuadable to the contrary.

" Why am I ask'd what next shall see the light?
Heavens! was I born for nothing but to write?" *Pope.*

I now declare publicly, what I have frequently affirmed in private, that, with the exception of finishing one work at my entire leisure, I withhold my pen from every purpose but that of cataloguing books. I am induced to activity by duty to my family; and, perhaps, I am qualified for the business of a Book Auctioneer in particular, by the knowledge I possess of the nature and value of literary property, obtained from long experience in every department of the bookselling business, and intimacy with books themselves. Intending to devote myself to that employment exclusively, I have made arrangements, and fitted-up my present premises accordingly. Few, I presume, will blame me for not desiring to be a rocking-stone or a "rolling stone." Those who countenance me in maintaining my wishes and my children, may be assured of my attention, and my lasting respect. The present deviation I deem necessary and final; and, as a final request, I entreat him who reads this page that he will do me the favour to peruse the remainder.

ASPERSIONS ANSWERED.

IT little concerns the world to be acquainted with my private opinions, but I deem it necessary to notice the imputations of irreligion that have been often urged against me during the last seven years; and though, from the silence I have hitherto preserved, I do not expect to be accused of haste, yet I am only constrained to remark publicly on the subject by the following circular letter, addressed to gentlemen of the legal profession.

“ SIR,

“ We take the liberty of transmitting to you the following statement, which we have already laid before several gentlemen at the bar.

“ Mr. HONE is (as you are probably aware,) a barrister of ten years' standing, who pursued his profession at first on the Midland Circuit, and more lately in the Court of Chancery. For several years, he obtained by this means such an income as was sufficient for the support of his family in comfort and independence. He is the brother of Mr. WILLIAM HONE, the bookseller, who became known to the public by the parodies on the Liturgy, for which he was prosecuted by the Attorney-general. As soon as the relationship between Mr. Hone and the author of these publications

became generally known, it produced the most calamitous effects upon the professional prospects of the former. The disapprobation which had been generally excited by the publication of the parodies was, by a natural though a most unjust prejudice, transferred to the innocent brother of the publisher. It was taken for granted that the two brothers held the same religious and political opinions, and Mr. Hone was gradually deserted by his clients, until he found himself deprived of his whole professional income. In the hope of diverting this prejudice against his character, he applied to the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the Vice Chancellor, and the twelve Judges, to subscribe to a book on Conveyancing, which he proposed to publish, and he received from them the most kind and condescending attention, with their permission to place their names at the head of his list of subscribers. He obtained a similar permission from the greater part of the gentlemen within the bar at the Court of Chancery; from some of the leaders of his own circuit, and many other members of his profession. Distress and poverty, however, have prevented the completion of this design. It is painful to state that Mr. Hone and his wife and children have frequently been reduced to the actual want of the common necessities of life, and he has with difficulty preserved a sufficiency of raiment to appear in the situation of a gentleman.

“All this weight of misfortune has been as unmerited as distressing. So far is Mr. Hone from adopting his brother’s *religious* or political opinions, that he actually abandoned his society, after having repeatedly made the most affectionate and earnest, though unavailing, protests against his proceedings. They are the children of a religious and virtuous father, to whose principles and maxims of conduct is to be ascribed the resignation and fortitude with which Mr. Hone has borne the heavy calamity under which he has been suffering.

“An opportunity has been found for enabling Mr. Hone to emigrate to one of the colonies, with a fair prospect of maintaining himself and family by his profession.

“The difficulty of his availing himself of this escape from want, consists in his inability to purchase the necessary outfit for himself and family, and to defray the expences of the voyage. On the most moderate estimate, seven or eight hundred pounds will be required for this purpose. In the hope of raising this sum, several gentlemen at the bar have opened a subscription; and Messrs. Hoares, in Fleet-street, will receive any money which may be collected. If you should feel disposed to assist in this object, you will perhaps have the goodness to contribute as expedi-

tiously as possible, as it is of the utmost importance that Mr. Hone should not lose the opportunity of sailing in the present autumn.

"We have the honour to be,

"Sir,

"Your most obedient humble Servants,

"JOHN RAITHEY,

"JAMES STEPHEN, JUN.

"J. H. KOE.

"*Lincoln's Inn; 18th August, 1823.*"

This statement, lithographically printed without the slightest knowledge on my part that it had been in contemplation, was two days in circulation among the gentlemen at the bar and on the rolls of the courts before I heard of it from an utter stranger. My feelings on the occasion, a brother only, and a brother only so circumstanced, can imagine. I had long known of my brother's embarrassments, but by this means I first obtained information of their magnitude, and that such serious allegations regarding myself were extensively promulgated.

It is not my purpose to comment; yet, as the circular speaks of my brother's "protests against *my* proceedings," I must remark that these protests were no more than objections verbally urged to my political opinions and publications, except a single letter during the late queen's trial, remonstrating against a pamphlet I wrote on that subject which he saw advertised as ready to appear, and acquainting me that if it did, our intercourse must cease. His letter was certainly "earnest," and "affectionate;" and, as certainly, a "protest" against my "proceeding." Because I adopted that proceeding, which had been several weeks in preparation, and for several weeks publicly announced in the newspapers, "he actually abandoned my society," and we never met in a room till after the issue of the circular signed by Mr. Raithby, Mr. Stephen, and Mr. Koe.

The topic of that circular is to me a painful one, and I would fain avoid it; but to my children and to my excellent wife, who are dear to me as my life-blood—to the public—to that portion of the public especially who having been my especial friends, yet know of me only through evil report and good report,—to myself, with something of the self-respect which every one entertains who is not an exception to our common nature, and not to be excepted from civilized society—to these, and more than these, I owe that I should seem as I am, and not as I have been misconceived.

On Sunday, the 31st of August, the circular was inserted in the *John Bull*, with recommendations of the purpose that the gentlemen who signed it had in view, and with animadversions on myself by the editor of that newspaper, in the course of which I am denominated an advocate of “blasphemy.” The following remark was appended to the circular. “This measure is sanctioned by the LORD CHANCELLOR;—and THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE ABBOTT, MR. JUSTICE BAYLEY, MR. JUSTICE BEST, MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL, &c. &c. have subscribed.” The *Sun*, evening paper, copied the *John Bull* article verbatim, and it afterwards appeared in certain country papers. On Sunday, the 14th of September, the *John Bull* reverted to the subject in the following statement.

“MR. HONE THE BARRISTER.”

“We have received a communication from the gentlemen who signed the “circular” respecting the case of Mr. HONE, in which they request us to state, that we did not receive the “circular” which we published in our last Number but one, either from Mr. Hone himself, or from any of those whose names are subscribed to it.

“It is most true we did not; and we are most ready to relieve Mr. Hone from the suspicion that he did any act likely to attract public attention, either to his own circumstances, or the faults of a brother, for whom, as

our present correspondents say, 'he cannot cease to feel a deep affection and anxious interest.'

"The letter was forwarded to us by a person zealously anxious for Mr. Hone's success, and we, with the best intentions, (for which we are pleased to see the gentlemen who have since addressed us give us credit) added our influence to its circulation. It is by no means unsatisfactory to hear, from the same source, that 'the subscription has materially increased in consequence of our publication;' but our correspondent adds 'that Mr. Hone, having suffered much in his health and spirits, was painfully affected by seeing his name in a public newspaper, and feels still more distressed at being supposed accessory to the publication of a letter which seems to make him the author of a public censure upon the conduct of so near a relation.

"We are extremely sorry to have wounded Mr. Hone's feelings, or to have given to the world that which it appears was intended exclusively *for the profession*; we most willingly here bear testimony to the fact, that the letter was not sent to us by Mr. Hone, nor with his knowledge. We must be allowed to add, however, that, considering the vast number of gentlemen now engaged in the law, (supposing the letter *originally* to have been written under the sanction of Mr. Hone,) the communication of his sentiments and opinions upon his brother's public conduct to so large a body of persons seems to us to differ very little, at least in spirit, to a general publication of them to the world at large."

One fact was certain from the circular,—the critical situation of my brother's affairs; another was equally certain, that the letter itself was a strenuous effort by his friends to relieve him; and, under these circumstances, after calm consideration it appeared to me that there was only one point on which I ought to claim explanation.

From the time of my trials, it suited that portion of the public press which advocates the political opinions espoused by my brother, to connect my name with anti-Christian writers and publishers. Now, if I had purposed serious notice of daily calumnies, I should unhesitatingly have referred to my brother, not doubting his power, or his willingness, had the necessity been apparent, to have given conclusive testimony in rebuttal of the charges of irreligion. But the representation in the circular, that he did

not adopt my "*religious* opinions," purported, to public apprehension, that these were in fact the *irreligious* opinions publicly imputed to me. It purported an antithesis, a contradistinction; it was a clear line of separation, with Joseph on the one side religious—William on the other irreligious; and hence the representation in my brother's behalf became presumptive proof against me of a previously-unattested charge, which I should have confidently relied on disproving by my brother himself.

That my brother, in consequence of his being my brother, "was gradually deserted by his clients until he found himself deprived of his whole professional income," is an *ex-parte* statement. I neither deny nor admit it. It is a point that there is no necessity for us ever to moot: in private we ought not, and in public we cannot. This is the matured determination of my judgment upon that statement which dropped a sudden and heavy blow upon my heart. It may be information to some, that I have a heart.

Deciding thus, and confining myself to the religious ground, I required explanation upon that alone. For obvious reasons, arising from the best feelings towards my brother, I did not seek it of the gentlemen who signed the circular, but, at the beginning of September, addressed myself to him, and his answer is subjoined verbatim.

"40, Chancery Lane;
23d October, 1823.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,

"You have called my attention to the following passage in the circular, which to my great regret has lately appeared in some public newspapers, namely, "So far is Mr. Hone from adopting his brother's *religious* or political opinions, that he actually abandoned his society after having made the most affectionate and earnest, though unavailing protests against his proceedings." You consider that this passage is open to the construction, that I abandoned your society in consequence of *irreligious* opinions, or conduct on your part, during the time we were associated: you ask me to explain that part of the circular:

which I do the more readily on account of the anxiety you express concerning it.

“In our former familiar conversations, you have sometimes questioned parts of the text of the Old and New Testament, and controverted certain doctrines; this led to the differences which usually arise on discussions between persons of opposite theological principles: however, I did not understand you to reject Christianity, or to deny or impugn the genuineness or authenticity of the Old or New Testament as a whole. Since your Trials, numerous imputations of irreligion have, as you are aware, been publicly urged against you; but, if it be inferred that, as your brother, and from my private knowledge of your sentiments on religious subjects, during our intercourse within that period, I knew those imputations to be true, the inference is erroneous; yet your silence under them for the last three years or more, induced me, in common with many other persons, to conclude that you admitted the charge, and hence, during the latter period, I have abstained from having any further intercourse with you, although my brotherly regards were far, very far, from being extinguished.

“I have thus made a short point of my explanation, instead of going into the subject or minutiae.

“I would now add a few words to this, which is, probably, nearly the last letter which I shall have occasion to write to you before I leave England, preparing, as I am, to depart ere long for a very distant part of the world; I anticipate with, I assure you, the keenest sensations, the moment when I shall have to say farewell to you for, at least, some years: as future events are wisely kept from our knowledge, it may, possibly, prove a final parting in reference to this world; and at such a time it is my heart's desire that we, who are the children of the same parents, should take leave as brethren, each, as he hopes for forgiveness from the Father of Mercies, frankly forgiving the other every wrong that he may consider his brother to have done him in any way whatever. This will afford peace of mind to both, and, though personally far apart, we may yet remain one in heart and affection, and if preserved to meet again in this life, which I earnestly pray may be the case, I trust that each may learn that the other has been walking in the path of rectitude, and reaped the full reward of honourable conduct. The immense distance at which, in a few months, we shall be placed from each other, will prevent either of us from practically ministering to the necessities, if any, mental or pecuniary, of the other; nevertheless, one thing may be done, —we may entreat him who has been our Protector from our infancy to

manhood, to further us with his continual help, and thus be assured of weathering every storm.

“Before I close my letter, I would remark, that it has hitherto been my most studious endeavour to avoid every thing that might have the semblance of an attack upon your character or reputation, and I much regret that the diction of the circular should be liable to have such a construction upon it, or be considered in that light by yourself or your friends, as I can truly affirm that it was never so intended. Of course I have had my own opinion of the nature and tendency of your public acts, nor have I concealed that opinion at such times as it became necessary for me to avow it, though even then I did not forget our near relationship, nor could it possibly have escaped attention, that, on these occasions a brother’s feelings were creating a painful conflict in my mind.

“Numerous arrangements for my departure have unavoidably prevented me from writing to you ere this ; and, in conclusion, I would express a hope, that nothing I have said will be deemed by you as recrimination : that is far from my intention. Neither have I ventured to offer any thing in the shape of advice, as it might be deemed surplusage and obtrusive : you know my heart and views, and I think that I know your’s ;—each may therefore conclude what would be the counsel of the other ; and, if there be a reciprocal determination to continue to act with truth and integrity, we and our families must ultimately be benefited, and our happiness and their’s will be promoted and secured.

“Believe me,

“My dear William,

“Your ever affectionate Brother,

“JOSEPH HONE.”

Religion is a subject on which, more than on any other, the best men differ verbally, and agree practically. My brother had never fallen in with the gross imputations of irreligion urged against me, after our intercourse ceased in July 1820, if a little Biblical inquiry had enabled him fully to comprehend the objects and limits of mine, when I incidentally alluded to topics connected with it during our previous intimacy. Nor, if he had studied my character, could he have been induced to conclude that my silence

imported admission of the imputations. Separated in boyhood, our intercourse throughout life has only been occasional, and seldom lasting for more than a few months, after lapses of years. Varying in temper, opinion, and construction of mind, there are few points of contact between us. He has seen me "bear the proud man's contumely, the insult of rude ignorance, the sarcasm of malice, the hired censure of the sycophantic critic, whose preferment depends on the prostitution both of knowledge and conscience, and the virulence of the venal newspaper*," he mistook my patience for weakness, and my forbearance for inanity.

In our recent conversations I gather that a main reason for his supposing, as he affirms in his explanatory letter, that I admitted the charge of irreligion was, that I had not answered an article on the *Apocryphal New Testament*, in the *Quarterly Review* for October 1821. Certainly I had contemplated, and as I have recently stated, had commenced an answer; "when, abridgment of my leisure, but above all, the subsidence of my resentment into profound contempt for the flagitious frauds of the reverend reviewer, and a conviction that those who were qualified to judge of his article would see its mendacity, determined me not to engage in polemics."† I underrated that article, by assuming that it would not be overrated; and I now do somewhat, not as a stepping-stone to controversy, for which I have unconquerable dislike, but to convince unprejudiced minds that the Quarterly reviewer is indebted to my silence for the success of his labors.

As I purpose not to write another word on any topic connected with this pamphlet, it becomes me to state, that

* Dr. Vicesimus Knox, *Spirit of Despotism*, Pref. p. xi.

† Ancient Mysteries described. Pref. p. iii.

though the publicity given by the circular to the difference between my brother and myself was to me a source of sorrow and misery, my brotherly affection was undiminished, and is unextinguishable. The period approaches for his proceeding to a distant colony, and we shall part, not merely in semblance, but in reality, as brethren. We, and our families, mutually participate in deep regret at a disjunction that, as regards this world, may be for ever; and our best feelings and most ardent affections go forth for each other's happiness and prosperity.

My sole aim in the remaining pages is "A Refutation of the Quarterly Review of the Apocryphal New Testament," and they will contain a few remarks upon the strictures of the Rev. Dr. Butler, Archdeacon of Derby, and the Rev. Thomas Rennell, Rector of Kensington.

I am informed that the readers of the article in the Quarterly Review, consider it an attack that admits of no defence. The reviewer advances in apparently great strength, takes up his positions in a regular way, places the canon in front very orderly, and persons of little inquiry deem it impossible that I can resist such a force. But it is not force: had they reconnoitred, they would have found it trick. If they will follow me beyond his lines—and hitherto they have not taken the trouble to go further—they will see that he is a mere showman throwing shadows, which not being examined pass for realities. I pledge myself to prove that every—not the greater part of the charges, but that *every* charge urged against me by the reviewer is a wilful falsehood; and that every statement in support of each charge is a deliberately-manufactured fraud. I shall take them in the order most convenient to myself, but I shall take them all.*

* The whole of the reviewer's charges are answered in the following pages, or in the notes below them.

The Quarterly reviewer is one of that stamp whose motto is "We murder to dissect," and who first slay the author in order to cut up his book with impunity. Pursuing this convenient process, the reviewer, in his first paragraph, calls me "a wretch, as contemptible as he is wicked:" he informs his readers that I am "a poor illiterate creature, far too ignorant to have any share in the composition" of the work; and, in the final words of the same paragraph, he denominates it a "nefarious publication." In this way he sets out to do "the state some service."*

Speaking of me as the editor of the Apocryphal New Testament, the reviewer says: "In page vi. of his preface, (and afterwards in the work itself,) he affords ample proof of his ignorance of even the commonest matters, by the triumph with which he announces to his readers his fancied discoveries that *the Apostles' Creed* was not written by the Apostles! and that it did not originally contain the article of Christ's descent into hell!" The reviewer puts two notes of admiration to indicate astonishment at my twofold ignorance. But he was not astonished; he could not be astonished; for neither "in p. vi. of the preface," nor "afterwards in the work itself," have I "fancied" that the facts as to the creed and the descent were my "discoveries;" nor have I expressed a syllable of "triumph," or feeling, from which previous "ignorance" of those facts could be inferred. In short, I have not made a single observation upon them of any kind

* "Illiterate creature," as the reviewer describes me, I am in what *he* would call good company. "The illiterature of the Grand Monarque, Louis XIV. went so far, that, to the last, he could hardly write his name. He formed it out of six strait strokes, and a line of beauty, which first stood thus—I I I I I S: these he afterwards perfected, as well as he was able, and the result was—LOUIS." This autographic fact is in *Pegge's Anecdotes*, 8vo. 1803, p. 48.

whatever. His notes of admiration are strokes of falsehood.

Again: the reviewer charges me with "disingenuousness," because I have said in a note to my preface, "For large particulars of Christ's descent into hell see the gospel of *Nicodemus*, chap. xiii. to xx." He remarks, that, as in that gospel "hell" is represented as the place of torments, I assuredly "knew that this was not the sense in which the word is used in the creed." Here the "disingenuousness" is not in me, but in him. My reference to the *apocryphal* gospel was for *apocryphal* particulars. The reference, which stands in a note on a wholly different subject, occupying the whole of five pages of the preface, has nothing to do with the sense of the creed, regarding the descent, one way or the other. The reviewer's misconstruction of it is a juggling and violent perversion of its obvious meaning.*

The commencement of my introduction to the *Gospel of Mary*, in the Apocryphal New Testament, being selected by the Reviewer for his most violent attack, I subjoin it.

* "Hell, as a place of torments, was not the sense in which the word is used in the Creed." So says the reviewer, who I decline to take as authority upon that or any other point. The Church of England would be an authority, if, as a Church, she had declared the sense in which the word is to be taken; however she has not, and therefore she is no authority. It is true that "hell, as a place of torments," is now usually disclaimed by Church of England expositors on the Creed: but what was the sense in which it was taken by those who drew up the forty-two Articles of the Church of England? or by those who reduced the forty-two to thirty-nine Articles, and cut off a part of the old Article on the Descent into Hell? Has not hell, as it stands in the Creed, been taken as a place of torments by protestant prelates and clergy of the Church of England since that time? Finally, in what sense is the word taken at this very hour by those persons who repeat the Creed, and who never hear or conceive of hell than as a place of torment? In *Ancient Mysteries Described*, § v. I have cited several old instances of this belief, and described engravings that illustrate it.

“THE GOSPEL OF THE BIRTH OF MARY.

“In the primitive ages there was a Gospel extant bearing this name, attributed to St. Matthew, and received as genuine and authentic by several of the ancient Christian sects. It is to be found in the works of Jerome, a father of the Church who flourished in the fourth century, from whence the present translation is made. His contemporaries, Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, and Austin, also mention a Gospel under this title. The ancient copies differed from Jerome’s, for, from one of them, the learned Faustus, a native of Britain, who became Bishop of Riez, in Provence, endeavoured to prove that Christ was not the Son of God till after his baptism; and that he was not of the house of David, and tribe of Judah, because, according to the Gospel he cited, the virgin herself was not of this tribe, but of the tribe of Levi; her father being a priest of the name of Joachim. Epiphanius likewise cites a passage concerning the death of Zacharias, which is not in Jerome’s copy.”

It is essentially necessary that each part of this introduction should be remembered, because upon its statements the reviewer grounds his heaviest charge; and I entreat the reader to observe particularly that the introduction merely shows that Epiphanius and Austin mention the Gospel of Mary; that Epiphanius quotes a passage from it; that Faustus deduces a doctrine from it; that neither the fact nor the doctrine is derivable from Jerome’s copy; and that, therefore, “the ancient copies differed from Jerome’s.”

It is obvious that my introduction is so drawn as to leave its reader in doubt; and, on that very account, a candid antagonist would incline to respect, and disdain to misrepresent me. Not, however, to anticipate, the reviewer’s charge shall be set forth in his own words. He says:—

“To each of the assertions, namely, that the Gospel which the Editor presents to his readers was received by several ancient sects—that it is to be found in St. Jerome, and that it is quoted by Epiphanius and Austin, we now proceed to give a direct denial, accompanied by proof that the Editor was aware of the falsehood of them all!”

This, with his covetous note of admiration, reads well; it is easy and bold, and has an air of sincerity mightily

imposing. Permit me to introduce him more particularly. He maintains his spirit in the following amplification.

“*First*, then, we assert that the Gospel before us was not received by any of the ancient Christian sects. Here, as in many other cases, the original spurious Gospel has disappeared, and the present is a miserable forgery of a later age, which has taken its place and name. Of this, the editor could not possibly be ignorant, as the fact is positively stated even in the title to that very chapter of Jones’s work* from which he has taken and perverted the facts in his Preface. Jones there asserts that ‘the present Gospel is different from the old one,’ and in proof brings forward two fragments of the original Gospel preserved by Epiphanius and Austin, the first of which does not occur in the present work, and the other directly contradicts one of its most remarkable statements.

“*Secondly*, we assert that this Gospel is not contained in the works of Jerome, and that when the Editor maintained the contrary, he was fully aware of the falsehood of his statement. In the printed editions, indeed, of Jerome’s works, from the carelessness or the scrupulousness of his editors, there have been inserted three letters, one purporting to be addressed by two Bishops, Chromatius and Heliodorus, to Jerome, requesting him to undertake a translation of this Gospel; the others, pretending to be his answers, accompanied by the required translation. No one, we should imagine, could read these letters, and observe the palpable contradictions which they contain, the excessive folly of their arguments, and the barbarisms of the style in which they are written, without at once pronouncing them clumsy and senseless forgeries. If the editor, however, should profess his inability to detect the imposture, it would certainly be inconsistent with the rules of fair argument to limit an adversary’s talent for misapprehension, in order to convict him of dishonesty. We must, therefore, admit his plea; but the admission will avail him nothing, for the fact is stated for him in the most decided and intelligible manner. Fabricius calls this Gospel ‘*Evangelium de Nativitate S. Mariæ jactatum olim sub falsis nominibus Scriptoris S. Matthæi et interpretis S. Hieronymi*,’ and without hesitation calls the letters to which we have alluded the works of Pseudo-Chromatius, Pseudo-Heliodorus, and Pseudo-Jerome. Dupin says, that these Epistles are certainly spurious; and in this declaration all the learned men whose opinions Fabricius subjoins to

* “*Jones’s Work*” will be often referred to in the ensuing pages; it is entitled “A New and full Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament. By the Rev. Jeremiah Jones. Oxford, 1798.” 3 vols. 8vo.

his own, Petavius, Vossius, Cave, and many others, wholly coincide. Casaubon, indeed, says, that there is not a single sentence in the Latin Gospel which does not argue the folly of those who are unable to distinguish between its 'dirty puddle' and Jerome's golden stream. *Last of all*, Jones himself, whose book was never out of the Editor's hands, subscribes to the expressions of these eminent writers. We conclude, therefore, as we began, with affirming that he could not possibly be ignorant of the falsehood of the assertion which he has deliberately made."

According to this ingenious reticulation of taunt and objection, it appears that the Gospel of Mary was not translated by Jerome; that the letters of the two bishops to Jerome, and his answers, are forgeries; and that "the fact is stated for me in the most decided and intelligible manner by Fabricius." Stated for *me*! why, in a few lines afterwards, he writes that Jones's book was never out of my hands, and that I had not consulted one original source of information. Really such reviewers as mine should have good memories. Fabricius stated the fact for *me*! Not upon the reviewer's showing, but upon my own declaration, I hope it will be believed that I had not read that author: Fabricius is in Latin, and I am not ashamed to own that I cannot read him. If the reviewer exult upon this declaration, it will be the unsanctified triumph of malignity over misfortune: for a great misfortune it was in my childhood, a terrible misfortune, which, during many years of manhood, I have not ceased to deplore, without power to remedy, that scholastic education was closed against me by the straitened circumstances of my honest and excellent parents. Not for *me*, then, has Fabricius declared his opinion that these letters are spurious. But, suppose I had read Fabricius; was I bound to attach implicit credit to his opinion because "Petavius, Vossius, Cave, and many others, wholly coincide" with him? Yes, says the Reviewer, "Jones himself, whose book was never out of the Editor's hands, subscribes to the expressions of these eminent writers." It is impos-

sible to describe my contempt for the writer of this daring falsehood. Jones does *not* subscribe to their expressions. Jones says, "perhaps those Epistles may be supposititious;" but, for the opinion that they are, he instantly declares, "I am not able yet to see that clear evidence which the writers last mentioned pretend."* Is this subscribing to their expressions? If Fabricius's rejection of the present Gospel of Mary, and the correspondence between Jerome and the bishops, was not stated for *me*, it must be recollected that it was stated for Jones; that Jones does not acquiesce in Fabricius's determination; and that Jones does not deny that the "dirty puddle" of the Latin Gospel might have flowed from the "golden stream" of the Latin father. They who are acquainted with Jones's book, know his unsparing hate to imposture; and that, if conscientiously he could, he gladly would have called the Epistles and the Gospel gross forgeries. He must have had good reason for not subscribing to the opinions of those who did call them so, and for expressing his dissent in words so marked and unequivocal, that the reviewer could not mistake it for subscription; but, subscription suiting the reviewer's purpose better than dissent, he preferred the fraud to the truth.

"*The original spurious Gospel has disappeared, and the present is a miserable forgery of a later age, which has taken its place.*" Is it? In what page of Jones's volumes is this stated? for I beg to repeat that Jones was my only authority. My Introduction affirms, in Jones's own words, that "the ancient copies differed from Jerome's." But this, it seems, was not enough; for my accuser says it is "a careless expression of Jones, of which I have cautiously avoided Jones's explanation." Avoided Jones's explanation! The Reviewer knows that Jones gives no explana-

* Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. p. 143.

tion; he knows that all that Jones does is to show that the ancient copies did differ from Jerome's; he knows that I do the very same; and the reader himself sees it. I give it with only this difference, that what Jones spreads over several pages, I abbreviate in as many lines. Jones, so far from using such a bold unmistakable expression as that "the original spurious Gospel has disappeared," says, not "carelessly," but carefully, "the ancient copies differed from Jerome's." Differed from Jerome's what? Why from Jerome's copy. Jones, after inserting the Gospel, carefully observes, "The book of the Nativity of Mary suffered many alterations, and the ancient copies of it were very different from the present copy, which I have above published, out of Jerome's works."* Jones is a decided writer; he never minces an opinion or an expression, and, had he thought the Gospel of Mary in Jerome's works a forgery, he would have used the very word. My adherence to what I conceived was his sense, is so faithful that I express it in his own words; and my conception of that sense is corroborated by Dr. Lardner, who, speaking of this Gospel, says, "our present copies are very much altered from the ancient ones."†

"*We assert that this Gospel is not contained in the works of Jerome, and that when the Editor maintained the contrary, he was fully aware of the falsehood of his statement.*" This is the Reviewer's assertion. Let it be observed that I "maintained" nothing: I merely said that the Gospel was "in the works of Jerome;" I did not even say that Jerome translated it, or that he was applied to by two bishops for that purpose. Referring to Jeremiah Jones, let us see what *he* asserts. He divides his work on the Canon into parts; the first two parts treat of *lost* Apocry-

* Jones, vol. ii. p. 131. † Lardner's Works, 4to. vol. iv. p. 631.

phal Books, and the third part of *extant* Apocryphal Books. In the *first* part he confines himself to “a complete enumeration of all the *lost* Apocryphal Books of the New Testament;” and by way of preliminary, he gives “A Catalogue of Books *not extant* now, formerly published under the names of our Saviour, his Apostles, their Companions, &c.”* At the end of the catalogue, he says, “These are *all* the Apocryphal Books *not extant*, which I have been able to find any mention of in the writings of the four first centuries after our Saviour. I proposed, indeed, to have annexed here the catalogue of the books *still extant* in like manner as the *not extant*; but this catalogue will be so necessary in the *third* part of this work, that I shall defer the producing it in full, or at large, till then.” Jones does not insert the Gospel of Mary in this Catalogue of Books *not extant*. In the *second* part, wholly confining himself to “a particular and critical inquiry into each of the *lost* Apocryphal Books,” he makes not the least inquiry concerning the Gospel of Mary; but, on the contrary, most carefully assigns as a reason for not doing it, that “the Protevangelion of James, and the *Gospel of the Birth of Mary*, are two Apocryphal Books *now extant*, and will be produced in the *third* part.”† Accordingly, in the *third* part, which enumerates and considers none but *extant* Apocryphal Books of the first four centuries, he inserts the Gospel of Mary in Latin, with a translation into English. He entitles it, “*The Gospel of the Birth of Mary, published out of Jerome’s works*,”‡ and then, by way of introduction, states the following reasons for publishing this Gospel—

“1. Because *there was certainly a Gospel extant under this name in the primitive ages of Christianity.*

* Jones, vol. i. p. 29.

† Ibid. p. 464.

‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 77.

- “2. Because it was received by several of the ancient Christian hereticks.
- “3. Because it passed formerly under the name of St. Matthew.
- “4. Because many of its relations were credited by the ancient Catholick Christians in different countries.
- “5. Because it contains the same things as the *Protevangelion of St. James*.
- “The ONLY place of the ancient writings in which it is EXTANT is among JEROME’S WORKS (*Epist. ad Chromatium et Heliodorum.*) The occasion of its being found there was the desire of Chromatius and Heliodorus, two Bishops, to JEROME, that he would translate it out of Hebrew, and give them his judgment upon it. Their Letter to him, with his Answer to them, and another Letter of his concerning this Gospel, I have published after this Gospel.”

On Jones’s reasons for inserting this Gospel being compared with my Introduction to the Gospel, it will be seen how very cautiously I kept to his language; and that he alone is my authority for asserting that the Gospel of Mary is to be found in the works of Jerome.* The opinion that it is foisted into Jerome’s works, it is evident that Jones declines; and it is equally evident that the reviewer, with that fact before his eyes, deliberately fabricated the con-

* “Saynt Jherome reherceth in his prologue, whan he was a chylde he had a lytell boke of thystory of the natyuite of the virgyn Marye, but, as he remembered a long tyme after, he translated it by the prayer of some persones.”—*Golden Legend*.

“There are, who hunt out antiquated lore:
And never but on musty authors pore.”

Mr. Gifford’s Persius, Sat. i. ver. 138.

The extract from the *Golden Legend* is for amusement, not authority.

trary, for the purpose of asserting that the Gospel is not contained in the works of Jerome, and that when I stated it was, I was fully aware of the falsehood of the statement.

It being proved that Jones does not assent to the notion that the Epistles of the two Bishops and Jerome are forgeries, and that he inserts the Gospel of Mary "out of Jerome's works" as a book of the first four centuries still extant, he must have had strong reasons for not falling in with the opinions of Fabricius and other critics. I presume that he may have derived his reasons from Jerome himself. "Never," observes Beausobre, "did Constantine VI. whom the miserable monks scandalized with the contemptible name of Copronymus, discover more wisdom and prudence than when he forbade the title *saint* to be given to any except the apostles." In the spirit of these "miserable monks," the reverend reviewer dignifies his favorite father by the appellation of "St. Jerome." It was of better men than the reviewer that Beausobre says, "What provokes beyond all patience, is to see that, in order to defend opinions evidently false, a sentence is quoted from an ancient writer, and puffed off with the title of a *saint*, and a *great saint*. People on hearing this superb title are seduced into an imagination that they hear an oracle, and sincerely believe that justness of thought, accuracy of expression, solidity of reasoning, and demonstrative evidence, are necessarily connected with *saintship* and *great saintship*; they even fancy that such men were under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. Such as these pretend to shackle what is most at liberty in us—reason and faith; and this, under pretence of a religious reverence for the fathers, while the true design is to maintain the credit of errors and manifest abuses, and to domineer over the consciences of mankind."* The reviewer's

* Beausobre Hist. du Manichæisme. See Robinson's Eccles. Res. p. 184.

“St. Jerome” was the foster-father of the Apocryphal Gospel of the Nazarenes. Jerome’s own account of the affair is, that Matthew was the first who composed a Gospel of Christ in the Hebrew language; that this Hebrew Gospel was preserved in the library of Cesària; that the Nazareans of Beræa in Syria, made use of it; that they granted him the favor of writing it out; that he translated it into Greek; and that he also translated it into Latin. Jerome calls it “the Gospel which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use, which I lately translated out of Hebrew into Greek, and is by most esteemed the authentic Gospel of Matthew.”* He elsewhere speaks of it as the Gospel “which I have lately translated into Greek and Latin, and which Origen often used.†” Jones says that there is not the least intimation of any version having been made of it till Jerome made his translations, which, as well as the original Hebrew Gospel, are lost. Beda, who wrote in the seventeenth century, observes of this Gospel of the Nazarenes, that it “is not to be esteemed among the Apocryphal (or spurious) but Ecclesiastical Histories, because Jerome himself, who translated the sacred Scripture, has taken many testimonies out of it, and translated it into Greek and Latin.‡” After all this, Jones says, that Jerome affirms of this Gospel, that it was the same as the Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles, which Jerome “expressly rejects as Apocryphal! as a book of the heretics! as written by men destitute of the spirit and grace of God! without a due regard to truth!”§

The Gospel of the Nazarenes is variously estimated; but Jones calls it a spurious and infamous forgery. The clearest account and largest quotations from it now extant, are to be found in Jerome’s works; and from these, which are

* Jones i. p. 280.

† Ibid. p. 276.

‡ Jones on the Canon, vol. i. p. 283.

§ Ibid, p. 299.

translated by Jones, I select one as a specimen. Jerome says, "Whoever reads the Book of *Canticles*, and will understand by the spouse of the soul the Word of God (Christ), and will believe the Gospel which is intitled, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, which I lately translated, in which our Saviour is introduced, saying, 'Just now my mother, the Holy Ghost, laid hold on me by one of my hairs,' will not scruple to say, the Word of God was born of the Spirit, and the soul, which is the spouse of the Word, has the Holy Ghost for its mother in law." By Jones's citations, it appears that this Gospel contained ludicrous and fabulous things; such as that when Christ bade the rich man sell all, and give to the poor, "The rich man hereupon began to scratch his head:" it represents Christ as unwilling to be baptized by John; as intimating that he was not baptized at all; and questioning whether he was not a sinner: it makes Christ say, "The Holy Ghost my mother lately took me by one of my hairs, and led me to the great mountain Thabor;" and this part Jerome refers to, in his illustration of the *Canticles* just quoted.

To Jerome, therefore, the Greek and Latin Christians were indebted for their acquaintance with the Apocryphal Gospel of the Nazarenes, which had been concealed from their view by the Hebrew language till he unlocked the "gate" to gratify their curiosity. If Jerome could translate "a book of the heretics! written by men destitute of the spirit and grace of God! without a due regard to truth!" was he disqualified for translating the Apocryphal Gospel of *Mary*? and if the ancient copies of the Gospel of *Mary* differed from Jerome's, may we not be indebted to Jerome for that *difference*? Baillet says, "It is agreed that St. Jerome may be the greatest saint of all translators, but that he is not the most exact: he hath taken liberties which the laws of translation will not admit."* He translated, and

* Jortin's Remarks, vol. ii. p. 149.

did every thing at full speed. He says that he allotted himself but three days for translating the three books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song. This is his own incredible affirmation;* and he was obliged to confess, that, in translating Origen, when he found any thing not consonant to the common judgment and opinions of his time, and which might give offence to the "simple people," he omitted it. Daille says, that it was his constant practice to suppress what he pleased in his translations.† Was such a man unlikely to have omitted passages from the Gospel of Mary, and otherwise accommodate it to "simple people?"

I think it probable that the "dirty puddle" of translation in the Gospel of Mary, which the reviewer says could not have proceeded from Jerome's "golden stream," really was an oozing from that "golden stream," and purposely bewrayed by Jerome himself. He was a great dissembler; and believing that others dissembled like himself, he says that the apostle Paul counterfeited ignorance to the Galatians, because he knew they were a dull heavy people. A father who could so affirm of an apostle could readily adopt the same conduct, and affect low and mean language to serve a turn. He affirms, too, that the quarrel between Peter and Paul was only feigned; that they understood each other very well, and only pretended to have a difference.‡ Who does not so see that the saint's mind was fraudulent? Dean Milner says, that learned as Jerome undoubtedly was, he was still more distinguished for vain glory than for learning; that he seems to have known too little of that sincere love of truth which is connected with humility; that his knowledge of theology was

* Daille's Right Use, part ii. p. 44.

† Ibid. part i. p. 40.

‡ Du Pin's Eccl. Hist. (Dublin,) vol. i. p. 352.

contracted and low ; that the reputation of his knowledge and abilities has been much overrated ; that he contributed in a greater degree than any other writer of antiquity to the growth of superstition ; and that his learned ignorance availed more than any other cause to darken the light of the gospel.* Whatever were Jerome's virtues, he was ambitious and wily, of irascible and violent temper, credulous of error, weak in principle, rancorous in resentment, and so dishonest in controversy, that he would argue any way. At one time he stoutly contended against the apostolical succession of bishops ; but afterwards getting embroiled with the bishop of Jerusalem, he then contended as strongly for it.† Whether right or wrong he fought for victory, and rejected no means, however illicit, to ensure it. Employing his eloquence to restrain all females to a state of perpetual virginity, his " golden stream " would have washed away the marriage ceremony, and the whole human race might have perished in the deluge. Jerome was a miracle-monger, a bigot, and a persecutor ; and Jones being well acquainted with his failings and labors, was therefore very likely to think that he did translate the apocryphal Gospel of Mary ; that the correspondence between him and the two bishops was genuine ; and that these Epistles and the Gospel itself were properly inserted amongst his works. At any rate, Jones does *not* subscribe to the opinions of preceding critics, who presumed the correspondence spurious ; nor does he say that the apocryphal Gospel of Mary is a forgery of the gospel under that name ; but he affirms that "*the only place of the ANCIENT writings in which IT is extant is among JEROME'S WORKS :*" he calls it "*Jerome's translation ;*"

* Nelson's Fasts, Art. Ember-days.

† Milner's Church History, 8vo. 1812, vol. ii. p. 470, et seq.

and he inserts it, with his own English translation, "among other such pieces *now extant*." It is clear that the reviewer palters with the Gospel of Mary in a double sense; that he perverts Jones's expressions; and that he fabricates Jones to have said what he never did say. His assertion that "this gospel is not contained in the works of Jerome, and that when I asserted it was, I was fully aware of the falsehood of the statement," is a foul malversation; and the most scrupulous mind must be convinced of the wilful falsehood of the charge by which he seeks to dishonour me.*

* However little the reviewer may be suspected of veracity, he assumes a particular veneration for that essential virtue, and thinks me a "discreditable" person, because I suppressed "the number and names of the 'several ancient Christian sects' who I affirm received the Gospel of Mary." He says, "On examination it will be found that they dwindle down to two—the Gnostics and Manichæans!" This note of self-admiration at the end might have been spared. He actually does not know that Mosheim (*Eccles. Hist.* vol. i. p. 134, 139,) endeavours to account for the "diversity of sects" among the Gnostics. There were upwards of fifty different sects of Gnostics. How miserably as a reviewer, how scandalously as a divine, this critical character lacks information that in either capacity should be at his fingers' ends.

The reviewer is welcome to all he can gain by having detected an error I fell into concerning Faustus. On transcribing that name from Jones's work, I looked into the edition before the last of Watkins's very useful Biographical Dictionary, and finding that "*Faustus, a learned prelate of the fifth century, was a native of Britain, and in 455 became Bishop of Riez, in Provence,*" &c. I wrote of the Gospel of Mary that "the ancient copies differed from Jerome's, for from one of them *the learned Faustus, a native of Britain, who became Bishop of Riez in Provence, endeavoured to prove,*" &c. This was a mistake; and the reviewer gravely inquires, "Is there a single reader of *divinity* so utterly ignorant of the commonest facts, as not to be aware that Faustus was an African, a teacher of the Manichæan heresy at Carthage?" I answer Yes, thousands of readers of 'divinity;' for this is not a fact in divinity, but a fact in ecclesiastical history, which I take permission to believe is as different from divinity as Faustus the Manichæan is different from Faustus the bishop. Let me instance that Jerome confounds Simon the Just who met Alexander the Great when he came to Jerusalem, with Simon the High Priest, in the days of Herod (Jones, vol. ii. p. 151.); yet Jerome will not therefore be condemned to oblivion: nor will Cornelius Nepos be banished our schools, because, in treating professedly of the Life of Miltiades the son of Cypsilas, he ascribes to him the actions of another Miltiades the son of Cimon. (*Lempriere's Classical Diet.* art. *Miltiades*.)

Besides the "divinity" blunder committed by the reviewer, in his

The Introduction to the *Protevangelion* of James, which stands in the Apocryphal New Testament next after the Gospel of Mary, affirms, that "the allusions to this apocryphal Gospel in the ancient Fathers are frequent, and their expressions indicate that it had obtained a very general credit in the Christian world." I was led into this statement by Jones. 1st. The contents at the head of one of his chapters state that "several of the relations of the Gospel of Mary and the Protevangelion have been credited by the ancients."* 2dly. He says, "Several of the accounts or relations have been credited by some ancient Christian writers."† 3dly. He says, "This fact is mentioned and credited by Tertullian, Petrus Alexandrinus, Origen, Epiphanius, Theophylact, and others."‡ 4thly. He says, "This story, which is in the Protevangelion, was very much known and credited by the ancients."§ 5thly. He says, "From all which it is very evident, that the account of Joseph's age and family, which is in the Gospel of the Birth of Mary and the Protevangelion of James, met with a very

denunciation of mine concerning Faustus, he at the same time commits another, which brings us in juxta-position. He says that Toland's "Amyntor, published in 1698," a book relating to the *New Testament*, "gave rise to the *Codex Pseudepigraphus* of Fabricius." This latter work regards the *Old Testament*, as its title purports, "*Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*." It was not published until 1713, fifteen years after Toland's book, nor was it the work by Fabricius to which Toland's Amyntor gave rise; but the work of Fabricius to which it *did* give rise, was on the *New Testament*, and entitled "*Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*;" this was published in 1703, only five years after the Amyntor. I mistook the later Faustus for the earlier Faustus: the reviewer mistakes the later Codex for the earlier Codex. He charges me with Faustus: I debit him, *per contra*, with Codex. How stands the balance?

"Dulness is sacred in a sound divine;" in the reverend reviewer it is personified. To climax his absurdity, he should have used her exclamation—

"Faustus is our friend!"—*Dunciad*, b. iii. l. 308.

* Jones, vol. ii. c. xvii. p. 133.

† Ibid. p. 134.

‡ Ibid. p. 135.

§ Ibid. p. 135.

general credit among the ancient Christians ;” and he says, “ Baronius cites many of the Fathers, as having given credit to its accounts.”* 6thly. He says, “ Besides the former places cited out of Epiphanius, there are two more in his works which seem to have plain reference, the one to the Protevangelion, the other to the Gospel of Mary and the Protevangelion.”† I did not perceive that, at a distance of several pages from these passages, he observes, “ It is true, indeed, some parts of the history have been credited, yet it does not appear that they were the more credited because contained in either of these Gospels.”‡ He has other remarks to the same effect ; which wholly escaped me, as they might have escaped any one who was not reading his book thoroughly.§

Jones says, and I have said after him, that “ Postellus brought the manuscript of the Protevangelion from the Levant ;” and that he “ asserts it was publicly read as canonical in the Eastern churches, they not doubting that James was the author of it.”|| Whether the Eastern churches did or did not receive the Protevangelion is of no consequence ; for, if they even did receive it, there is not a man one degree removed from an idiot, who would therefore suppose that it is in the least degree worthy of our canon. The drift of the reviewer is to represent me as claiming that authority for it. If I did, the reader shall judge. In the very page of Jones, from whence I take the above words in my introduction to the Protevangelion — in this very page Jones commences

* Jones, p. 137.

† Ibid. p. 138.

‡ Ibid. p. 146.

§ In *Ancient Mysteries described*, I have shown that the whole of the Gospel of *Mary*, and portions of the *Protevangelion*, were performed at Coventry as plays. The volume also describes numerous ancient engravings, and refers to monkish legends, founded on subjects in these apocryphal Gospels.

|| Jones, p. 158.

a long citation from Postellus and Bibliander, in whose very language I might have stated, that the Protevangelion "is to be looked upon, as a jewel among the books of divinity; as the basis and foundation of all the gospel history; as the beginning of the present Gospel of Mark; that James, the brother of our Lord, was the author of it; that it is never reckoned among the apocryphal and spurious writings; that there is nothing in it repugnant to the sacred history, &c."* Not a word of this have I penned, till I now cite it for the purpose of enabling honest minds to determine whether, if I had designed to impose on my readers, I would have rejected representations so favourable to such a purpose. No. In no introduction to any one book of the Apocryphal New Testament, have I, by comment, gloss, or insinuation, propitiated the mind in its behalf.†

Except a sentence or two on other pieces, that I have observed on before, and a quotation from the Gospel of *Infancy*, the reviewer confines himself to the Gospel of Mary and the Protevangelion. Mark his reason: "To press any further inquiry into the system pursued in this publication, and to penetrate deeper into the dark recesses of its falsehoods, is a task which we cannot inflict on ourselves." What an amiable deficiency of moral courage! What a delicate sensibility to come over him just at the moment when he ought to have acquainted his readers that

* Jones, vol. ii. p. 158.

† The Gospel of the *Infancy*, the only other work in the Apocryphal New Testament that the reviewer notices, appears to have been a popular book. Robert Robinson (Eccles. Res. p. 427,) relates, on the authority of Muratori, that three copies of this Gospel were contained in a catalogue, assigned to the tenth century, of the MSS. in the splendid conventual library of Bobbio, in the Appennines. Jones assigns great antiquity to this apocryphal Gospel. He says, (vol. ii. p. 259,) that "the first book of Christ's *Infancy*, and the stories thereof, were forged by the Gnostics in the beginning of the second century. This is plain, from Irenæus, l. i. c. 17, who expressly states that these heretics were the authors or inventors of these idle stories."

these "dark recesses" are the parts of the Apocryphal New Testament that contain the Epistles of Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, and the Shepherd of Hermas. Under the pretence that, to "penetrate deeper" would be an infliction that he ought in mercy to be spared, the reviewer artfully conceals that two-thirds of the Apocryphal New Testament are occupied by these pieces; all of them translated and published by Wake, archbishop of Canterbury, under the title of "The Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers," in order to show the accommodation of the church of England to early worship.* The reviewer presumed, that, by an affectation of horror, he could shock the ignorant into a belief that these "dark recesses," containing the Archbishop's translations, were filled by

———— "things horrible and awfu',
Which e'en to name would be unlawfu'." — *Burns*.

Johnson explains Cant to be "a corrupt dialect used by beggars and vagabonds; a whining pretension to goodness in affected terms." What sturdy knave, or oily hypocrite, ever canted more subtilly than my reverend slanderer?†

* William Wake, born at Blandford in Dorsetshire, in 1657, and admitted of Christ-Church College, Oxford, in 1672; was successively doctor in divinity, canon of Christ-Church, chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, preacher to Gray's Inn, rector of St. James's, Westminster, dean of Exeter, and bishop of Lincoln. On the death of Archbishop Tenison, he was translated to the metropolitan see, and became Lord Primate of all England, in 1716. In 1693, Archbishop Wake first published his "Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers;" he died in 1737, just as his fourth edition of that work appeared.

† It is affirmed by the reviewer, that Jones "was never out of my hands; that my notes, my tables, and my catalogues, are all copied from Jones."—Very well: I admit that some of them were from Jones; and that those respecting the Epistles were from Wake. Had my name been on the title-page of the Apocryphal New Testament as the editor, then, indeed, I should have assumed a semblance of learning personally, that

Notwithstanding so much of the Quarterly machinery is dislocated, one part, and the most mischievous part, remains to be destroyed.

My preface to the Apocryphal New Testament commences with this question: "After the writings contained in the New Testament were selected from the numerous Gospels and Epistles then in existence, what became of the books that were rejected by the compilers?" Upon this question—a very natural one, as I then considered, by way of introduction to the apocryphal books now in existence—the reviewer observes, that "one object of this question is to bespeak a favourable hearing for these writings, whose authenticity, it is insinuated, was deemed worthy of consideration, at least, by the compilers of the New Testament."

would have been ridiculous. The volume is anonymous; and, though I never concealed from any one who inquired concerning the compiler, that I compiled it myself, I always mentioned the English sources of the Gospels and Epistles; and that I drew up the introductory notices, and stated the authorities from thence. But it is remarkable that my accuser's obligations to Jones are more serious than mine, and equally unacknowledged. With barely "edging or trimming of a scholar, a welt or so," he does not quote one author in a dead language, who was not pointed out to him by Jones; and what he says concerning English writers, any one who takes the trouble to look at the work on the Canon, (vol. i. pages 17, 28, 43, 65, &c.) will see is also filched from Jones's volume, and that from the same source he furnishes out his six pages of rote about the canon, and about Dodwell's mistaken notion that "the books comprising the present canon were concealed in the coffers of particular churches till the time of Trajan." Throughout the whole of his article, the only original scrap is a note, which he pompously announces to have taken from "a MS. book of an old and respectable clergyman, now before us." It might as well have been "behind us;" for it is a story how Toland and Le Clerc differed about a passage in Josephus; how Le Clerc handed the book to Toland; how Toland "owned that he did not know Greek;" and how "Le Clerc immediately broke off all connexion with him." The anonymous author of this MS. tale, sets out with "Mr. Welby (another clergyman) told me" the story, and ends with "*Gale*, the famous anabaptist, was present, and gave me this account." The "old clergyman" forgot, when he finished with "*Gale*" as his authority, that he had begun on the authority of "Mr. Welby;" and the reviewer could not discover that "the old and respectable clergyman" was fibbing.

My answer to this is plain and short. The question itself is founded on the following extract from Mosheim :

“The opinions, or rather the conjectures of the learned, concerning the time when the books of the New Testament were collected into one volume, as also about the authors of that collection, are extremely different. This important *question* is attended with great, and almost insuperable, difficulties to us in these later times. It is, however, sufficient for us to know that, before the middle of the second century, the greatest part of the books of the New Testament were read in every Christian society throughout the world, and received as a divine rule of faith and manners. Hence it appears, that *these sacred writings were CAREFULLY SEPARATED from several human compositions upon the same subject*, either by some of the apostles themselves, who lived so long, or by their disciples and successors, who were spread abroad through all nations.”*

When I read Mosheim’s statement, that “these sacred writings were carefully separated from several human compositions,” I took their having been “carefully separated” to mean that they had been “selected,” and used that word. However, the reviewer affirms that another object of the question was “to inspire suspicion of the canonical writings, which, according to this account, rest for their credit on the authority of compilers of a late age, who, as fallible men, might easily mistake between canonical and spurious writings.” According to what “account?” Not to any “account” of mine, for I gave no “account;” the word is wholly unwarranted: all that I did was to frame a question, almost in the very language of Mosheim, before quoted. Indeed, the question itself was suggested by Mosheim’s use of the word “question.” He says, “This important question is attended with almost insuperable difficulties.” Still, so far was I from uttering or citing a syllable to “inspire suspicion of the canonical writings,” that, while using the sentence in which

* Mosheim’s Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 108.

Mosheim speaks of "insuperable difficulties," I wholly abstained from mentioning or hinting at difficulties. To negative the reviewer's charge, I quote the following remarkable passage, of a directly opposite tendency, from my preface:

"Although it is uncertain whether the books of the New Testament were declared canonical by the Nicene Council, or by some other, or when or by whom they were collected into a volume, it is certain (see Table II. at the end of this work,) that they were considered genuine and authentic, with a few variations of opinion as to some of them, by the most early Christian writers; and that they were selected from various other Gospels and Epistles, the titles of which are mentioned in the works of the Fathers and the early historians of the Church. (See Table, I. at end.)"

This passage, affirming that the books of the New Testament were received as genuine and authentic by the most early Christian writers, would have been a stumbling-block to the reviewer's purpose of showing that I denied the New Testament writings; and therefore, with consistent dishonesty, he carefully suppresses it.

But this suppression is venial, compared with an offence that the reviewer deliberately perpetrates in the subjoined paragraph. He says,

"It may be right to notice a preliminary objection which has always been a favourite one with the infidel, and which is revived in the preface to the work before us,—namely, that they who admit the body of Canonical Scripture, as exhibited in the New Testament, are unable to name the precise period at which it was received as such by the Christian church, or to produce the decree of any council, in the first two centuries, which affixes its sanction either to the present or any other Canon of Scripture. As this is conceived to be a sufficient proof of the total uncertainty of the Canon, many triumphant inferences are of course deduced from it. 'The whole story,' it is insinuated, 'may be an imposture; at all events, we may not have received the true and genuine history of it; we can have no certain accounts of the doctrines promulgated by the first teachers; and, indeed, the simple fact that no formal recognition of the official documents took place, is of itself a very suspicious circumstance,

and quite enough to cast an air of doubt over the whole transaction.' What may be the justice of these inferences, a very few remarks will suffice to demonstrate, &c."

This is a master stroke. In the above paragraph, the reviewer places a *sentence* between inverted commas. The sentence begins on the tenth line from the top of the paragraph, with the words 'The whole story,' and ends the third line from the bottom, with the words 'the whole transaction.' The inverted commas that he puts before the first and after the last words of this *sentence*, denote it to be a quotation from my preface, which he is discussing. Compare this *quoted sentence* with the suppressed passage, and there is a palpable discrepancy. The contradiction arises thus:—This *quoted sentence*, which every one who has read the Quarterly article, without referring to the Apocryphal New Testament, must infallibly believe to have been quoted by the reviewer from my preface, is not in my preface; it is not in any part of the work; it is not in any piece that I ever wrote or published, or sold, or read: it is an impudent forgery by the reviewer himself.

By such a man, who I have shown to have wilfully perverted the plainest facts, and to have deliberately fabricated the most palpable falsehoods; whose article, from beginning to end, is a laboriously devised fraud; who stands stripped of all pretensions to honesty, and convicted of the foulest forgery; by such a man I am accused of "sottish and hopeless ignorance," "a systematic disregard of truth," "a deep and desperate malignity," and "notorious infidelity." By such a man I am called "a poor illiterate creature," and "a wretch!" He is in orders, and perhaps took orders for abuse. He is a Divine—he may become a Christian. Like the preparer of a deadly poison, who muffles and wears a vizard, lest the subtilty of the concoction he designs for another should destroy himself, this audacious defamer, to conceal his identity and cloak his crime, uses the Quarterly

for a mask, and converts religion into a wrap-rascal. But I know him. At present he performs the prescribed formalities, in the living he was presented to upon the consummation of his crime, with the semblance of conferring on his parishioners the benefit of clergy; and, when a splendid monument shall be reared to his pious memory, the reader who approaches it

“will find his virtues
Trimly set forth in lapidary lines;
Truth with her torch beside, and little Cupids
Dropping upon his tomb their marble tears.”—*Southey*.

I now come to a work that appeared in May, 1822, entitled “*Proofs of Inspiration, or the Ground of Distinction between the New Testament and the Apocryphal Volume*; occasioned by the recent publication of the Apocryphal New Testament by Hone: by the Rev. *Thomas Rennell*, B.D. F.R.S. Vicar of Kensington.” There is something here not quite in good taste, not quite gentlemanly. If Mr. Rennell so departed from the usual course, as to introduce my name on his title-page, he might have prefixed to it the only Christian name that some, who think themselves Christians, allow me. To me, however, the omission is no discredit; nor, to me, is it of any consequence that in his preface he calls the criticism of the *Quarterly Review* “an able article.” It seems that Mr. Rennell delayed his work in the expectation of an answer “long since *threatened* by the Editors of the Apocryphal Volume to the article above-mentioned;” I presume he may be almost persuaded that, though I advertised “a Refutation of the *Quarterly Review* of the Apocryphal New Testament,” my abstinence from the press arose from other feelings than those of fear. I confess that I smiled

at Mr. Rennell's praise of an adversary, whose reputation for ability has lasted exactly two years and a quarter, merely because I maintained a sovereign contempt for his dishonesty during that period.

Mr. Rennell supposes that the Apocryphal New Testament is "an insidious attempt to place its writings upon the same foundation with the Scriptures themselves." Upon that, as a general allegation, I shall observe when I come to set forth the circumstances that occasioned the work, and my design in publishing it.

Mr. Rennell's animadversions on the apocryphal Gospels are so mingled with animadversions on me, that from thence it must be presumed that I designed to palm these Gospels for genuine, and to represent their contents as true. His strictures altogether tend to impute to me motives and conduct that he misconceives, and misrepresents. To illustrate, by an instance or two. He remarks on the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, that, "In the latter part of it there is a poetical description of the descent into hell, and the victory of our Lord over the power of darkness, uniting, as in Milton, the imagery of a classical imagination with the basis of scriptural truth." By this, and by quoting an entire chapter from the Gospel, as it stands in the Apocryphal New Testament, Mr. Rennell only does justice to it as a composition; but he says "It would be a waste of time to enlarge upon an imposture that no one has had the hardihood to defend. It was probably a forgery of some Christian at the conclusion of the third or the beginning of the fourth century*." This infallibly persuades every reader that I contended for this gospel; while the fact stands thus:--that in the introduction to it, I have distinctly stated the opinion that it was a forgery; that Jones affirms it was a forgery; and that he mentions the frequency of such

* Mr. Rennell's Proofs of Inspiration, p. 123.

forgeries. Mr. Rennell, by a single line, might have spared his readers from error, and done me justice.

Mr. Rennell, although I have mentioned my reason in the Preface, finds it difficult to account for my insertion of *the Apostles' Creed*. He says, "no Christian of the present day, in the Church of England at least, can believe that the very words of this creed were actually dictated by the apostles themselves." Mr. Rennell mistakes. His own Common Prayer-book, both in the morning and evening service, directs that "there shall be said or sung *the Apostles' Creed* by the minister and the people;" and because the Common Prayer-book calls it "the Apostles' Creed," many Christians of the Church of England not only "can," but *do* believe that it is the Apostles' Creed.* I included it in the Apocryphal New Testament, because it is so denominated, and because Jones himself expressly inserts it in his "*List of the Apocryphal Books now extant.*"†

* For positive proof of this belief in our own times, see "EASTER; a Manual explanatory of terms of the Church Service in the Book of Common Prayer;" a dialogue between a parishioner and a clergyman, "for the use of the heads of families, and all who are immediately under their protection." The parishioner is taught by the clergyman, concerning the Apostles' Creed, as follows:—

"*Parishioner.* Pray inform me why the *Belief* which I am taught is called the *Apostles' Creed*."

"*Clergyman.* It was thought requisite for the preservation of the light which had been communicated to men to draw up a short form of words which should comprise the principal points of christian faith: and there is a tradition generally received, that as many of the Apostles as had escaped persecution assembled together for that purpose; and, by each of them contributing his part, they composed a collection of the chief heads of faith, relating to what Christ had taught them. It was called the *Apostles' Creed*, or (agreeably to the same tradition) the Creed taught by the Apostles, because the original profession of faith, drawn up by the Apostles themselves, formed the principal portion of it."

This is a cheap tract, "price 9d. or 7s. 6d. per dozen; published by F. C. and J. Rivington, St. Paul's Church-yard, and Waterloo-place." These are Mr. Rennell's own publishers, and the tract lies on their counter by the side of his own *Proofs of Inspiration*.

Though my introduction to the *Epistles of Paul and Seneca* might have been longer, it could not have been more fair; and yet, from the tenor of Mr. Rennell's strictures, it is to be gathered that I advocated these pieces. Had I been inclined to do so I might have elevated Seneca to a *saint* in the very words of another saint; for Jerome says "Seneca I should not have ranked in my catalogue of *saints*, but that I was determined to it by those *Epistles*,"* This passage from Jerome is in the same page of Jones from whence I have adopted Jones's moderated language, and merely observed, in Jones's words, that "Jerome places Seneca, on account of these *Epistles*, among the ecclesiastical and holy writers of the Christian Church." If Mr. Rennell had made the slightest representation of my impartiality, he would have found me sensible of kindness.

To Mr. Rennell's remarks concerning the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* in the Apocryphal New Testament, I most seriously object. My introduction to that book commences thus: "Tertullian says that this piece was forged by a Presbyter of Asia, who being convicted, confessed that he did it out of respect to Paul." Mr. Rennell takes no more notice of this sentence than if it had not existed, but acquaints his readers that "Thecla was often spoken of as a martyr by the early Fathers and historians; and her history was so celebrated as to tempt a proselyte of Asia to forge the original of the present work. For this we have the primitive testimony of Tertullian." On this fact, on the very fact repeated by him after me, Mr. Rennell immediately observes, "After this testimony on the part of Tertullian, no one will be hardy enough to contend for the authenticity of the Acts of Paul and Thecla." His observation clearly purports that I was "hardy enough to contend for its authenticity"; nay, he follows it

* Jones, vol. ii. page 61.

up with language still stronger. He says, "We have every reason, however, to believe that many parts of the book before us were interpolated. So that the piece, as we read it in the apocryphal volume, is an example of a double imposition." It is quite clear that, by Mr. Rennell stating from Tertullian that the piece is a forgery; by his concealing that I had made the same statement; and by his affirming that "the piece, as we read it in the apocryphal volume, is an example of a double imposition," conveys the idea that I had practised "imposition" by inserting it in the Apocryphal New Testament. If Mr. Rennell did not read my introduction to the Acts of Paul and Thecla, surely so to write concerning that piece as a portion of the apocryphal volume was not ingenuous; if he did read my introduction, the obliquity is increased.

In the introduction to the *Shepherd of Hermas*, in the Apocryphal New Testament I observe that "Origen thought it a most useful writing, and that it was divinely inspired." Upon this, Mr. Rennell inquires "What book of the New Testament would we receive as divinely inspired upon the testimony of a single witness?" I would answer the question, if I had asserted that the *Shepherd of Hermas*, or any other book of the Apocryphal New Testament, was inspired. All that I did with regard to *Hermas* was to mention, on Archbishop Wake's authority, what a few early writers affirmed of the book; and what I have alleged to have been said by Origen is in the archbishop's own words. Mr. Rennell, however, extracts from other parts of Origen, where that father moderates his opinion concerning this book, and adds that "these expressions are carefully kept out of sight by the editor." Can Mr. Rennell guess no other motive for my omission than an unfair one? He quotes from the very page wherein the archbishop not merely states these moderated expressions of Origen, but actually declares that they "were put forth by that father on account of some who

it seems did not pay the same respect" to the Shepherd of Hermas that Origen himself did. The archbishop's disregard of Origen's moderated expressions was the ground of my disregard; and, strange to say, the archbishop's disregard of those moderated expressions is "carefully kept out of sight" by Mr. Rennell. The archbishop may have been no authority to Mr. Rennell, but surely Mr. Rennell knew that he was my sole authority.

The antiquity of the Shepherd of Hermas Mr. Rennell admits to be unquestionable: he thinks that "the various moral allegories with which it abounds are highly edifying and instructive;" and, as a specimen of the book, he quotes a whole chapter of it from the Apoc. New Test. "Let us," says Mr. Rennell, "take the following vision, which describes the trials and tribulations to come as an example; and, to give it every possible advantage, it shall be printed in the same style with the holy scriptures, and with the same division into verses which has been effected by the pious labors of the editors of the apocryphal volume."* I understand the sneer; and, though Mr. Rennell is so candid as to state that "the various pieces which the *Apocryphal New Testament* contains have been often printed, both in their original language and in translations,"† I imagine it may be information to him, that a translation of the Shepherd of Hermas, made a hundred and sixty years ago, by John Pringle, is divided into verses; the book is in my hand, and I place the title of it in a note below.‡

* Mr. Rennell's Proofs; p. 77.

† Ibid. p. i. Introd.

‡ The title of Pringle's Shepherd of Hermas runs thus:—

"The Three Books of Hermas the Disciple of Paul the Apostle, viz. I. The Church. II. The Shepherd. III. The Similitudes. Englished by *John Pringle*. London: Printed for John White, in Threadneedle Street, behinde the Old Exchange, 1661," small 8vo. pp. 190.

The following are titles of other apocryphal pieces in my possession:

1. "*The First Book of the Gospel of Nicodemus*; translated from the

That the division of apocryphal pieces into verses is not an invention of mine, must be well known to Mr. Rennell, for he expressly mentions the "Apocrypha to the Old Testament," which is also "printed in the same style with the holy scripture, and with the same division of verses."*

original Hebrew. Printed and sold in London," without date, but apparently about Queen Anne's time; on coarse paper, one sheet, 12mo. on the title a woodcut portrait. On comparing this with a MS. copy, that I have, of the early translation of "*Nicodemus his Gospel*," printed by John Causterier, without date, it appears to be the first seven chapters of that translation, with slight alterations modernising the phraseology. This common hawker's edition of Nicodemus, which probably sold for a half-penny, is divided into eight chapters, and subdivided into verses.

2. "*Nicodemus's Gospel*. Containing an extraordinary and minute Account of our blessed Saviour's Trial and Accusation; his Death and Passion; his Descent into the Invisible World; and what happened there during that period: with his Ascension into Heaven. Which curious relation will be found agreeable to Scripture. By *Joseph Wilson*. London: Printed for the Author; and sold at his House in Lancaster Court, in the Strand, 1767." 8vo. with a Preface, pp.78. This edition, also after Causterier's, is, like his, divided into thirteen chapters, and Wilson subdivides it into verses.
3. *The Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans*, a Translation into Welch, (at the end of the "Testament y deuddeg Patriarch, sef Meibion Jacob. A Gyfieithwyd allan or Groeg gan Robert Grosthead Esgob Lincoln. Argraphwyd yn y Mwythig, 1719," 12mo.) is divided into verses, with this addition, after the last verse—"Epistl Paul at y Laodiceaid a garfwyd yn y Bibl hynaf ar y Breintwyd yn Worms." The Epistle to the Laodiceans in Jones on the Canon is also divided into verses; but Jones's work was not published until seven years after the Epistle in the Welsh Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.

* In 1820, and before the Apocryphal New Testament appeared in that year, the Rev. Richard Laurence, LL.D. Regius Professor of Hebrew, Canon of Christ Church, &c. and now Archbishop of Cashel, published the Apocryphal First Book of *Ezra* in Ethiopic, with a Latin and English translation. The archbishop had published in 1819 the Apocryphal Book of *The Ascension of Isaiah the Prophet*, also in Ethiopic, with similar translations. In 1821, after the publication of the second edition of the Apocryphal New Testament, the archbishop produced an English translation of the Apocryphal *Book of Enoch the Prophet*. These three apocryphal books were printed at the Oxford university press, and are divided into chapters and verses.

I have remarked elsewhere* that "The Gospels included in the Apocryphal New Testament, rank with such pieces in the Old Testament Apocrypha as the book of Tobit; wherein it is related that his son married the widow of seven husbands, all of whom were slain on the nuptial night by a devil that was in love with her; but who was himself finally discomfited by the eighth bridegroom fumigating the wedding chamber with the burning heart and liver of a fish; *the which smell when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt.*"† "The angel so conspicuous in Tobit is guilty of a gross lie, saying, first, that he was Azarias the son of Ananias,‡ and afterwards§ that he was Raphael, one of the seven angels."|| This, and the wonderful history of Bel and the Dragon, with the delectable and instructive story of Susannah and the Elders, so often

* At the end of *Ancient Mysteries Described*.

† Tobit, viii. 3.

‡ Ibid. V. 12.

§ Ibid. xii. 15.

|| Jones, vol. i. p. 10.

Tobit has been a great favorite with the multitude. There is in the British Museum a black-letter garland bearing this title: "A Pleasant Ballad of Tobias, wherein is shewed what wonderful things chanced to him in his Youth; and how he wedded a young Damosell that had Seven Husbands, but never enjoyed their Company, being all Slain by an Evil Spirit. *To a pleasant new Tune.*" A sheet with woodcuts.

How the dog in *Tobit* came to be popular is not easily explained. The animal is only mentioned once on the departure of the Angel and Tobias for their journey to Media. The host in St. Paul's Church-yard, who, by having *Tobit's Dog* for a sign, outrivals the fame of him of the *Goose and Gridiron*, should thankfully receive the information that the apocryphal dog was Tobias's.—*So they both went forth, and the young man's dog with them.* (Tobit, v. 16.) This going forth was just after the angel had cheated Tobit with a lie.

The History of Thoby, in the *Golden Legend*, states that after the fish was caught and roasted. They "toke it with them for to ete by the waye, and the remenaüt they salted, that it might suffyse them tyl they came in to the cyte of Rages."

A good specimen of Count Goudt's peculiar style of execution is his print after Elsheimer of the Journeying with the Fish across a stream. But the most sumptuous illustration of this apocryphal book is Raphael's picture of *Our Lady of the Fish*, in which are the Virgin, the Infant Jesus, St. Jerome, the Archangel, and Tobias with his Fish. These were insisted on by the nuns for whom it was painted, and render this splendid production a remarkable instance of anachronism.

illustrated by prurient painters, are appointed as morning and evening lessons, which, according to the thirty-nine articles, with the other apocryphal “books, as Jerome saith, the church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners:” Mr. Rennell terms these pieces “useful and pious books;” I must be excused for dissenting from his denomination, and for wondering, with others, “that such stories as Bel and the Dragon should be read in the church.”* Jones terms the “useful and pious books” of Mr. Rennell “idle fables of the Apocrypha of the Old Testament;”† and yet I am called to account for adopting “the same division into verses which has been effected by the pious labours of the editors of” *that* Apocrypha. For the double-lined rule enclosing the title to the Apocryphal New Testament, a precedent may be found in Archbishop Wake’s title-page to his own editions of “the Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers,” which being so distinguished suggested to me the idea. The Epistles in the archbishop’s volume, and the form of his title-page, I adopted together.†

Other strictures of Mr. Rennell have been answered by preceding remarks on the Quarterly reviewer, or will be by what follows. This observation equally applies to several of the objections in another publication, which appeared soon after Mr. Rennell’s, viz.

“*The Genuine and Apocryphal Gospels compared.* A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Derby, at the Visitations at Derby and Chesterfield, June 6 and 7, 1822, and published at their request. By *Samuel Butler*, D.D. F.R.S. and S.A. &c. *Archdeacon of Derby*, and Head-master of Shrewsbury School.” I think that

——— “Katterfelto, with his hair on end,
At his own wonders, wond’ring for his bread,”

* Bishop Cosin on the Canon, p. 197.

† Jones, vol. ii. p. 161.

could not have looked more wonderstruck than I did when I saw, for the first time, on Messrs. Rivington's counter, a Visitation Charge from the Venerable the Archdeacon of Derby to his Clergy, entirely devoted to an expression of this gentleman's views concerning the books in the Apocryphal New Testament; nor was my astonishment diminished after I had perused it.*

Mr. Archdeacon Butler objects to the "placing before the common people spurious gospels, as like in form and phraseology as they can be made to the originals." But if, by the "common people," he means the ignorant and uninquiring among hard-working men, (and there are no other "common people" among them,) he forgets that, however attractive a six-shilling volume, of two hundred and seventy pages may be, it is not within their purchase. The Archdeacon also objects to the "language of the translations." He says, this "is an English improvement upon a French invention;" and proceeds thus: "I have in my possession a French translation of these very writings, but not in scriptural phraseology, published evidently with the same insidious intention, professedly at London, but, in fact, at Paris in 1769: the work, I believe, is not common." Not very common, certainly; but the Archdeacon is probably aware by this time that I have in my possession a work in English, from whence I took the

* The Archdeacon objects that by using the word "records," which means "authentic memorials," I attempt to place the Apocryphal New Testament on a footing with the New Testament. To explain upon this point I beg it to be remembered that Archbishop Wake's volume bears the title of "*The Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers; being, together with the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, a complete Collection of the most primitive Antiquity.*" Wake says that "the authors of these *Genuine Epistles* had not only the advantage of hearing the Apostles, and conversing with them," but "*Barnabas*, the author of one of these Epistles was himself an Apostle." If these Epistles are *genuine*, they are "authentic memorials" or "records" relative to the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles; and I have affirmed truly that the volume contains "historical records relative to Christ and his Apostles."

translations he animadvert upon. This book, certainly, the Archdeacon had not seen when he gave his Visitation Charge; for, whatever exceptions he takes to the language or phraseology of these translations are exceptions against Jeremiah Jones, who made the translations, and not against me. I simply transferred them from his work on the Canon into the Apocryphal New Testament, without adding, subtracting, transposing, or altering, a single word.

Speaking of me, the archdeacon says, "That *ostensible* editor is a man whose name is but too well known to the ranks of disaffection and infidelity; who appears to possess talents above the ordinary class, and effrontery much above those talents." I comprehend the archdeacon's meaning by this reprobation; but, at this moment, "disaffection" to offence restrains me to the remark, that there are no "ranks" to which I am not "well known," from the pen I now wield as a weapon of defence; that to no "ranks" a man so "well known" publicly, from such a circumstance, is so little, "known" personally, as I am; and that no "ranks" are so well known to me as those that surround me on the shelves of the room I now sit in. From thence, as from "a lodge in some vast wilderness," I sometimes ventured into the "wilderness of this world." Though I communed with few, yet I felt that I belonged to the commonwealth. Hence I was not indifferent to questions that have agitated and induced expressions of opinion; and hence my voice sometimes arose in conjunction with the honest and the honourable, to inquire

"Who call'd of old so many seats his own?"*

Nor can I claim to be excepted from exemplifying Jortin's remark, that, "if great men will do what they please, they must expect that little men will say what they please, and

* Mr. Gifford's Juvenal, Sat. i. v. 153.

call a cat, a cat.”* When I so wrote, I had the “effrontery” to think I did right; and I am neither proud nor ashamed of my productions.† My “disaffection” extended to departures from unchangeable principles; for it was

* Jortin’s Tracts, vol. ii. p. 535.

† Dr. Butler seems to coincide with the reckless declaration of the Quarterly reviewer, that, “beyond doubt or contradiction, Hone has a set of writers in his pay, with whom truth is an idle name, and honesty a by-word and a jest.” I rebut this redoubted assertion, by point-blank denial. Except a hundred pounds for a volume, which appeared with its author’s name on the title-page, the extent of my payment for authorship, during the last six years, has not been twelve pounds altogether; and the whole of the gratuitous assistance I received during that period would not make three pages. The pieces I brought out, with which the public are best acquainted, were the products of my own pen. Be their merits or demerits what they may, one real service has resulted from them. By showing what engraving on wood could effect in a popular way, and exciting a taste for art in the more humble ranks of life, they created a new era in the history of publication. They are the parents of the present cheap literature, which extends to a sale of at least four hundred thousand copies every week, and gives large and constant employment to talent in that particular branch of engraving which I selected as the best adapted to enforce, and give circulation to my own thoughts.

Besides this, I have the high satisfaction of knowing that my little pieces acquainted every rank of society, in the most remote corner of the British dominions, with the powers of Mr. George Cruikshank, whose genius had been wasted on mere caricature till it embodied my ideas and feelings. When his brother artists, and every one who had the least judgment, praised the multiform fertility of the freest pencil that ever drew a line on a block, it began to be appreciated by publishers. His recent designs in that way, though some have been cruelly cut up by unskilful or careless wood-engravers, and his own excellent etchings, with the currency they give the works they appear in, incontestibly that prove his abilities have forced themselves into demand. His conception of original fancy seems intuitive, and yet his elaboration of a fac-simile would glisten the peering eye of a bibliomaniac. I barely do justice to his talents by this remark; and I have more satisfactory evidence of its truth than a certificate “with five justices’ hands to it, and witnesses more than a page would hold.” Robert Burns had not more kindly feelings when he wrote *Auld lang Syne*, than I have towards my friend George Cruikshank. “We twa ha’ padlled;” and though, as regards me, his occupation’s gone, our mutual esteem is undiminished. Those who require his assistance may consider this as a note of introduction to him, at his house, No. 25, Middleton Terrace, Pentonville.

Every tract that I have written of the description alluded to, with the whole of the cuts, will shortly appear collected together, with a preface, &c. in one volume, entitled “POLITICAL FACETIÆ, by William Hone:”—that collection will end the use of my pen in that way.

grounded on the belief that politics are morals, and that “it is not men’s free will that they have government or no government, because it is not in their free will to obey, or not to obey, the acts of the court of nature, which is God’s court; and this court enacteth, that societies suffer not mankind to perish, which must necessarily follow if they appoint no government.”*

I hope I may be pardoned for the preceding digression on a point no other way connected with the subject, than by Dr. Butler’s strong expressions concerning me as the “*ostensible* editor” of the Apocryphal New Testament. Regarding me in that character, he proceeds to say—

“The book under our consideration *undoubtedly* is not, and in fact does not assume to be, his own production. I grieve to say that the *real* editor is a man of talents and attainments, which qualify him for undertaking better things, and is therefore entitled to no quarter for wilful and deliberate perversion of truth.”

In love of truth Archdeacon Butler is not my superior; and therefore I will frankly admit, that the absence of Jones’s work from the archdeacon’s well-enriched library, and his absence of information regarding me personally, may have led him to conceive that the editor and publisher were two persons. Yet, if he had instituted an easy inquiry before he ventured so far as to affirm that the “*ostensible* editor” of the Apocryphal New Testament “*undoubtedly*” was not the “*real* editor,” the presumed inability of the one, and the fancied “attainments” of the other, would have disappeared before the fact, of which he would have had instant proof, that the “*ostensible*” and “*real*” editor were “*undoubtedly*” myself alone; and the charge of “wilful and deliberate perversion of the truth” could not have been made. The archdeacon has been too hasty; so very hasty, as to hazard a similar charge against

* Rutherford’s *Lex Rex*, 4to. 1644, p. 8.

himself, by animadverting on me in the following language. Dr. Butler says—

“He has subjoined the Apostle’s Creed in its ancient state, copied from a note in Mr. Justice Bailey’s edition of the Common Prayer, and contrasted with the same creed in the usual editions of our Common Prayer-book. The reader is thus naturally induced to suppose that the learned Judge has disapproved of the Apostle’s Creed in its usual form; whereas, the note merely states, what no one questions, that ‘it is not to be understood that the Apostle’s Creed was framed by the apostles, or existed as a creed in their time.’ It is then given in its earliest form, as it existed prior to the year 600. The authorities for this are quoted, and there is subjoined the following important observation, which any fair and well-meaning editor ought to have produced, and which the editor of the Apocryphal Gospels, finding that he could not insert it without wholly destroying the insinuation he meant to convey, has wilfully, I may add, fraudulently, omitted. The words are these: ‘The additions were probably made *in opposition to particular heresies and opinions.*’ I have printed the latter part of this sentence in italics,” &c.

So far the archdeacon; and now for the fact: and for proof of the fact I beg my readers, and the archdeacon himself, to open the Apocryphal New Testament. At page 72, will be found a paragraph of only six lines. It is from this paragraph that the archdeacon charges me to have “wilfully and fraudulently omitted” the “important observation” of Mr. Justice Bailey. The paragraph stands thus:

“Mr. Justice Bailey says, ‘It is not to be understood that this creed was framed by the apostles, or indeed that it existed as a creed in their time;’ and, after giving the creed as it existed before the year 600, and which is here copied from his Common Prayer Book, he says, ‘how long this form had existed before the year 600, is not exactly known. The additions were probably made in opposition to particular heresies and errors.’”

As the sentence from Mr. Justice Bailey, which the Archdeacon alleges I “wilfully and fraudulently omitted,” ends my paragraph, it ends his accusation. But what an accusation to bring! Dr. Butler refers to the first two lines of a paragraph of six lines, as proof, that, in order to

convey an improper insinuation, I had quoted a sentence from Mr. Justice Bailey; and then he charges that, because I “could not insert another sentence from Mr. Justice Bailey, without wholly destroying that insinuation,” I had “wilfully and fraudulently omitted it:” whereas, at the next line but one, that is, in the last three lines of my paragraph, I had fairly and honestly inserted it. Had the archdeacon passed the single line that separates Mr. Justice Bailey’s two sentences, he would have been safe from the possibility of having it said that *he* is “entitled to no quarter for wilful and deliberate perversion of the truth.” But I forbear, and desire to be understood as not meaning that retort upon Dr. Butler in his own language, because I think him incapable of the crime it imputes. He has been too cursory, and expressed himself too hardly. His Visitation Charge bears decided marks of haste, and would not have been alluded to at all, but Dr. Butler’s rank and character constrain me not to condemn his censure of me personally, without endeavouring to obviate his misrepresentations.

Although much has been done in the preceding pages, yet further explanation seems requisite. To that end, and for the purpose of stating what appears to me to be points of objection, I will endeavour to review my two prefaces to the Apocryphal New Testament, without favour or affection. I imagine, then, that they may be spoken of by an impartial reviewer somewhat in this way:—

In the preface to the first edition of the Apocryphal New Testament, the editor says, “It has been supposed by many that the New Testament was compiled by the first Council of Nice, which was held early in the fourth century;” and he gives an account, by no means in favour of that Council, from Jortin. He affirms, on the authority of Mosheim, that neither the precise time or place in which it was held is known, and that its accounts have not been committed to writing. From this it appears he has very little respect for that Council; but he affirms that, “whether the books of the New Testament were declared cano-

nical by the Nicene Council or some other, or when or by whom they were collected into a volume, it is certain that they were considered genuine and authentic, with a few variations of opinion as to some of them, by the most early Christian writers." These books he thinks were selected from other books; and, as most of what he calls the rejected books are lost, he includes those that are extant in the present volume. These, he presumes, will be "acceptable to the theological student and the ecclesiastical antiquary," because they were the origin of many remarkable legends and stories, and sources from whence the old monkish dramatists obtained fables for many of their mysteries, or religious plays. In this latter view, the work is interesting to persons who are in that way inquisitive; and it is certainly useful to artists and collectors, because it elucidates the subjects of many pictures and prints by early printers and engravers. Of such affairs the editor may probably know more than of the canon of the New Testament, concerning which he expresses himself confusedly, and evidently is not well informed. His notions on that point are erroneous; yet he can hardly intend to attack or undermine it, for he admits the testimonies to the genuineness and authenticity of the books; and in proof of it he refers, by a note in his preface, to a table of testimonies, which table he subjoins to the volume. His division of the books into chapters and verses confers no sanctity upon them; for, if the Apocrypha to the Old Testament be so divided, there can be no valid objection to the Apocrypha to the New Testament receiving the same division. In his second edition, he retains the first preface, and writes a second, which reiterates the use of the volume to print and picture-fanciers, and cites other strictures from Jortin and Socrates Scholasticus, on the Council of Nice. This second preface concludes with remarks indicating the editor's admiration of the primitive simplicity of Christianity, his sense of some unfair attacks upon him as editor of the work, and his determination to receive them with complacency. This patience it is easier for the editor to imagine than to realize; for he is sure to receive further and heavier assaults, and for this reason, that his name stands on the title as the publisher. But, as any other editor or publisher might have produced such a volume without reprobation, it is illiberal and unjust to insinuate improper motives to this editor and publisher. His notions concerning the collection, which he calls a selection of the canonical books, may not be clear, but it is too much to say that he is an enemy to Christianity. A writer of that character would have written differently, and would scarcely have inserted the table of the New

Testament books, before referred to; nor have superadded, as he does in the second edition, a table of the times when, according to different authorities, the canonical books were written.

It will hardly be conceded that I can review my prefaces impartially; yet, I think, if they are deliberately examined and candidly considered, the result will be similar to the preceding statement. At any rate, that statement is a true representation of facts, and these facts can be easily accounted for.

Prone to inquiry from my childhood, and knowledge in other languages being to me as a "fountain sealed," I could only obtain it from my own. I had no one to direct or regulate me: all books that fell in my way, no matter on what subject, I read voraciously, and appetite increased with indulgence. For want of object, I neither extracted nor common-placed, but I got through a vast deal, with this disadvantage, that my recollections as to facts were general rather than particular. Modern works, a few excepted, I have known only as acquaintances, without desire to cultivate an insipid intimacy into the affection I entertain for their betters. Old books are sometimes rough in language, but they are pregnant of thought; and a few of them have been my daily companions and friends through life. Though in theology and religious controversy, I went no small way, yet of ecclesiastical history I knew nothing, or next to nothing, save from Jortin's Remarks, and dipping now and then into Eusebius, and the Lives of the Saints. Since the article in the Quarterly, I have better informed myself: before then, in Biblical criticism I had only perused books of moderate estimation and small value; but neither Michaelis nor Lardner. My resort was to meagre sources, and I confess I was not acquainted with better when I compiled the Apocryphal New Testament. The history of that work I shall now relate.

It was in the spring of 1820, that residing, as I do still,

on Ludgate-hill, I was exposed to a series of interruptions unfavourable to the accomplishment of any object requiring seclusion. I then had such an object very earnestly in view,—the completion of a Report of my Trials, illustrated by parodical collections. To effect it I left my family, and removed with my books and papers to lodgings at Camden Town; from thence I went daily to the British Museum, chiefly for the purpose of consulting the king's collection of pamphlets. One morning, while engaged in the reading room, with the Cotton MS. of the Coventry Mysteries, I glanced on an observation in Casley's preface to the catalogue of the King's MSS. concerning the text of the three heavenly witnesses, (1 John, V. 7.) Though acquainted with the controversy, yet by way of relief to the wearisomeness of transcribing, I examined some tracts on the passage, and one of them mentioning Jones on the Canon, on reference to that work, I for the first time saw the Apocryphal Gospels, which most appositely were the foundation of several of the Mysteries in the MS. at that moment before me. The incident was additionally interesting, because I not only found that these gospels were the ground-work of many catholic legends that I had formed an acquaintance with, but that they also were the subjects of several prints by Albert Durer, the Wierexes, and different old masters which I had collected as specimens of engraving. I instantly determined to print these gospels for the use of the curious in old literature, the drama, and the arts. Copy was ready for the printer, when I called upon a respectable bookseller for the purpose of securing Campbell's History of Scottish Poetry, a work of some rarity, which I had long desired to see, and had just been informed he had lately purchased. I obtained my prize, and afterwards, loitering to look over the woodcuts of an early Dutch History of the Bible, and incidentally inquiring concerning apocryphal pieces, Arch-

bishop Wake's "Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers" were produced, with this observation, that some were of opinion, that, if the Epistle of Barnabas was genuine, the piece ought to have been included in the New Testament. Wake's book, as well as Jones's, had passed through my hands as a bookseller, when either I had no curiosity to look into them, or was schooling myself into the salutary persuasion that a reader of old books is more likely to be a bookkeeper than a bookseller; but, however that may be, neither had before impressed me. If, as Abp. Wake says in his title-page, these epistles, "together with the books of the New Testament, formed a complete collection of the most primitive antiquity for about a hundred and fifty years after Christ," I saw that they were connected with the work I meditated. In short, the three volumes of Jeremiah Jones and the volume of the archbishop contained every apocryphal writing of the first ages. This new view of the subject induced me to pause; for, as Jones says that one object of his work was "the entertainment of the curious in Christian antiquities," so I conceived that, by adding the Epistles to the Gospels, I should increase the interest of the publication; and, imagining that such a compilation would bear the same relation to the New Testament that the Church Apocrypha does to the Old Testament, I divided the books into chapters, and the chapters into verses; putting contents to each chapter, and running head-lines on each page. Then drawing up short notices, from Jones and Wake, of ancient and modern authors who had mentioned the pieces, I prefixed these to the different books, without a single observation of my own.

All this was most hastily done; for I was so intensely engaged on the subject that originally carried me to the British Museum, that I attended there every day as soon as the doors were open, nor left the reading or print room

till they closed. After that hour, I was rummaging at booksellers, turning over portfolios of engravings at print-sellers, or extracting in private libraries; carrying each day's labour to Camden Town, and there arranging and writing till bed-time. What I did to the Apoc. N. Test. was at hours stolen from sleep, and when fatigued by the avocations I have alluded to. Upon these the idea of the apocryphal volume was altogether an interpolation, and I trifled with it mechanically, as an impertinence.* When it was somewhat more than half through the press, I was obliged to leave London for Brighton at a few hours' notice, and there, while engaged on a far different subject from either that, or the undertaking which occasioned my visit to the British Museum, I corrected the remaining proofs as they were sent to me from town by the printer. It was necessary to say something by way of preface, and this, which every one knows is that part of a work usually left till the last, I at the last moment hurried together. Having heard and read that the books of the New Testament were collected into a volume, and settled at the council of Nice, I stated that it was so affirmed; and, viewing the circumstances under which that council proceeded to its deliberations, and the deliberations themselves, with little respect, I spoke accordingly. The opinions of biblical critics concerning Jude and one or two other books in the New Testament, persuaded me that the council might have erred by including them. Archbishop Wake's preliminary discourse further persuaded me that,

* The haste with which the Apocryphal New Testament was put together, is evident. In the first edition, "the Order of all the Books" omits to mention the Gospel of *Nicodemus*. At the end of the volume, in Table II. (Art. ix. column 3,) the words "as hereafter will appear" have obviously no relation to the work, and are a gross blunder. In the i. *Corinthians*, two chapters are numbered alike as chap. vii. In ii. *Corinthians*, chap. 1, an exposition of Clemens Alexandrinus is incorporated as part of the Epistle of Clemens Romanus, &c.

if the Epistle of Barnabas were genuine, the council might have erred by omitting it; and, in truth, I was erring myself, from presuming, on a general impression, that the council of Nice had any thing to do with the canon. It is reasonable to imagine that, as I had Jones's work, I had read it, and that of course such notions must have been corrected, but to this I oppose the simple fact that I did not read it. From the time that I tore out the Gospels for the printer, and rushed through the pages relating to them, for the purpose of extracting matter for the introductions, I never looked at the mutilated volumes of Jones again. At Brighton, remote from all books, with only a transcript or two from Jortin, Mosheim, and Porson, that I thrust into my pocket on leaving town, I put together the preface, and did not arrive in London till more than a week after the volume thus concluded had been published. Perusal of the book will show, what I beg to repeat, that, so far from its conferring the least consequence on any one of the Gospels, the praise which Jones quotes from certain authors in order to refute, and which a fautor of fraud would have extracted, is not given in a single instance. I confined myself entirely to the naming of some early writers who mentioned the books, for the mere purpose of shewing that they were of early origin. That is the highest aim of my introductions, which were drawn up so rapidly, and with so much indifference, that the omissions of early authorities for their antiquity are by no means few. The whole of these introductions, had I commenced them as a summer-day's task, I could have executed with ease between sunrise and sunset. In short the volume was edited, if this can be called editing, by me, and me alone, without concert, aid, or communication with any one; and, under the disadvantages I have stated, it was in the hands of the public within six weeks from the time I

began it. This is the real history of the Apocryphal New Testament.

Concerning the books themselves, "whoever," says Archdeacon Butler, "is at the pains of examining these apocryphal writings, cannot but be struck with their amazing inferiority to the canonical books." This was my opinion when I compiled the volume; nor did I imagine, nor do I now think, that any person can possibly entertain the least favourable notion of the apocryphal Gospels in comparison with the genuine Gospels. Because I cannot express my own unequivocal meaning better, I adopt the language of the Archdeacon to affirm my sincere belief, that, "as to the internal evidence for the truth of these gospels, they are in themselves so childish and absurd, so contradictory to all our ideas of the divine attributes, so derogatory to the majesty of the Deity, so totally unedifying for any purposes of religious, or moral, or social life, so undoctrinal and unconsolatory, that they carry their own confutation with them; and can never gain credit with any person of sober sense or judgment." I have explained pretty fully why I published them, and I may add that my inclination to "subjects of learned curiosity, without any other end than the pleasure of reflecting on ancient customs, or on the industry with which studious men have endeavoured to recover them," blinded me to the liers-in-wait who have since assailed me. As justly may Mr. Archdeacon Butler be charged with jacobinism and popery, because he translated Lucien Buonaparte's Epic Poem, with a dedication by the author to "His Holiness Pope Pius VII.," as "notorious infidelity" be charged on me because I edited the Apocryphal New Testament.

"Notorious infidelity!" Yes; the Quarterly reviewer endeavours finally to affix on me that stigma. In his very first paragraph he adverts to what he chooses to call my

“escape” from the prosecutions against me for the parodies; and, by affirming that he “should not be justified in expressing a suspicion that the jury had previously resolved to acquit this man,” he, in fact, expresses it. I cannot, from the event, presume that my juries had previously resolved to convict; but, if ever efforts were made to prejudice a man under accusation before the issue was to be tried, those efforts were made throughout the country against me. Previous to the informations being filed, the case was prejudged by theatrical exhibitions and violent speeches in parliament. From that time until they were determined, during an interval of nine months, I was held up to general execration. The mighty hunters for translation, and the meanest poachers for preferment, all such orders of holy orders, furnished forth vessels of wrath. If the clergy in general could have been converted to such a use, the parish pulpits of England might have become

“ten thousand casks
For ever dribbling out their base contents,”—*Cowper*;

and then, indeed, the vehement inflammation of the public mind, from a general distribution of unrectified spirit, might have rendered my “escape” impossible. At St. Paul’s cathedral the official preacher of an official sermon, denounced me from the pulpit as an object of condemnation to my future judges, who, with the corporation of London, and its officers, were officially present. Is it not to be wondered that juries could be found in the metropolis uninfluenced by feelings to my prejudice? Yet these were the methods resorted to, while the Attorney-General was proceeding against me at the crown office; and when I was destitute of means to employ either solicitor or counsel. Within a week after I was charged with the three *ex officio* informations, I wrote concerning the prosecutions thus: “I despise the aspersion, and will refute it. This

I pledge myself to do, and to do it triumphantly, to the confusion and dismay of my enemies.”* A fortnight afterwards I renewed the pledge with this observation: “I must be allowed to choose my time and place for doing it; but I *will* do it, and, I repeat it, to the confusion and dismay of my enemies.”† Five months elapsed, and then I thought it necessary to say “The Parodies formerly published by me, I may, perhaps, be allowed to repeat, I always considered as mere political squibs, and nothing else. It is now (October, 1817,) two years and a half since I commenced to publish; in the course of which time I have issued upwards of one hundred and thirty pieces, chiefly of my own production. Not a week has elapsed during that period, without my having compiled or written something; but whether it were prose or verse, or

‘— grave, or gay, or lively, or severe,’

I console myself with the reflection that, amidst all I have put on paper, there is

‘Not one immoral, one indecent thought,
One line which, dying, I would wish to blot.’

Nor can there be found a single paragraph, or even sentence, of a profane or irreligious tendency in any of my publications. With a lively conception of wit, and an irresistible propensity to humour, I have likewise so profound a regard for the well-being of society, and so great a reverence for public morals, that I know of no temptation capable of inducing me to pen a line injurious to social happiness, or offensive to private virtue.”‡ I pray that

* Reformists' Register, (8th May, 1817,) vol. i. page 500.

† Ibid. (24th May,) p. 558.

‡ Reformists' Register, (25th Oct. 1817,) vol. ii. p. 430.

this may be taken as part of my present answer ; and I add, with added solemnity, if it be possible, that, for the suppression of anything I ever wrote or contemplated, or for the commission of any act at variance with the sentiments I have just re-affirmed, the world is not rich enough to present to me

‘ ——— a bribe, sufficient to requite
The loss of peace by day, of sleep by night.’

The time came for the redemption of my pledge to the public. On the morning of the 18th December, 1817, the first of three remarkable days that will never be blotted from *my* calendar, I rushed from my wife and children in bitter agony, leaving them sorrowing and hopeless of seeing me repass the threshold of their home—a home no more to them, if I could not defeat the powers then gathering themselves in Guildhall for my destruction. At that moment, or at any time before, I might have fled. I was in no custody, and no one was under recognizances that I should appear ; but the charges were untrue, and I loved truth too well to fly from falsehood. The advocates against me were able and eloquent, and the judgment-seat was occupied by talent and experience. The archers shot at me, but I climbed beyond their reach. I stood upon truth as a rock of sure defence ; and from that vantage ground I refused to be forced or enticed.

Early in my first day’s defence, I referred to the numerous pieces I had published, the greater part written by myself ; and, addressing the attorney-general, assured him that if, in any one of those pieces, he could lay his finger on a single sentence of a profane or irreligious nature, or tending to degrade or bring religion into contempt, I would refrain from uttering another word in my defence. I appealed to my jury whether either of them had ever read a line of such a tendency in any of my publications. Ad-

dressing the assembled hearers in court, I solicited and defied any individual present who knew a fact of the kind, or even anything that I had said or done that could be so interpreted, to stand forth instantly and testify it. Impressed by the most solemn feelings, "You will not," I observed to the jury, "hear me say one word that I do not utter from my heart and from perfect conviction. It is of little consequence whether I am a member of the established church or dissent from it: it is enough that I am a Christian, and I make the declaration with a reverence for Christianity not to be exceeded by any person in this court." In my third day's defence, referring to the extreme depression under which I had laboured at the commencement from illness and debility, produced by the two former days' exertions and long previous anxiety, I could not forbear from thus expressing astonishment at the resuscitation of my faculties:—"If Providence ever interfered for the protection of the weak and the defenceless, that interference is most surely manifested in my case. It has interposed to protect me, a destitute and helpless man, from the rage and malice of my enemies. I can attribute my defence to no other agency, for I am weak and incapable, and at this moment I am a wonder unto myself." So impressed, I proceeded to observe, "There is nothing can crush me but my own sense of doing wrong; the moment I feel it, I fall down in self-abasement before my accusers: but when I have done no wrong, when I know I am right, I am as a strong man armed, and in this spirit I now wage battle with the attorney-general." During the three days that I contended against what was wrongfully urged by my prosecutors, or interposed to my disadvantage by the presiding judges, I used no arts, no feints, no devices. I was no orator; I was nothing but an innocent man. Had I known myself otherwise, I must have been speechless. The three successive verdicts of three different juries were

not obtained by me ; but, through me, right obtained a victory over wrong.

Never from that hour has a word escaped my pen or lips, either publicly or privately, in dishonour or dispraise of any individual opposed to me. I buried my resentments in the grave of the prosecutions ; I even hallowed the ashes of the slain, by not exulting in the conquest. But the forgiveness of enemies was a principle not comprehended by mine. While laid at my feet by the blows they had sustained from my single hand, they charged me with weakness and incapacity, because I did not spittle on them. They now impugn the integrity of my juries, whom I knew not, nor saw till they were in the jury-box, and in whom I so little confided, that, a week before, I had moved the court to set them aside. They call my success an "escape:" I call it an instance of the power of truth upon the human heart and understanding; an exemplification of a golden rule taught to me in my childhood, that "Honesty is the best policy." They suggest that the declarations which, under the most awful persuasion, and in the sincerity of my heart, I made on my trials, were untrue. The imputation of irreligion has been revived upon me through every channel that would convey calumny. I have been

"traded by men
Who neither knew my faculties or person,"

till undersized minds, sitting in judgment upon a bare allegation, without proof, pronounce falsehood to be fact; and "Ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me."

From the day that I publicly solicited and challenged my prosecutors, my jurymen, and every individual in court, to adduce a single line or saying of mine, tending in the least degree to degrade religion ; from that hour to this, neither did or could any one, not even the most vindictive of my enemies, in their fiercest heats, bring a fact of the

sort against me. Until within the last eighteen months, I have carried on the business of a publisher and bookseller in the house I still occupy, in the heart of London, and in the most public thoroughfare; and, during that period, when the press was teeming with such productions, I ask whether any of the nature I allude to came from me? I dare and defy the proof of a sentiment of that kind, either penned or published by me, or of any article of such a tendency having been sold or issued by any person in my employment. My conduct has been the reverse. In the beginning of 1821, I put forth the "*Spirit of Despotism*," the most able political work, upon Christian principles, in existence. I selected it as best calculated to counteract the erroneous representations of religion, contained in various cheap political publications, that were circulating throughout the country; and I printed fifteen thousand copies at the first stroke, as an eighteen-penny pamphlet.* Few have been able to render so important a service to society as the rescue of the "*Spirit of Despotism*" from the oblivion it was doomed to by its excellent author. For this act alone, it may be affirmed of me that I have not lived in vain; and I refer it to the consideration of the reader, whether a publication, better adapted than any other in the English language to diffuse Christian principles with political information, would be printed at the lowest possible price, for the most extensive circulation, by a person opposed to the extension of those principles. If it be objected that it was the speculation of a bookseller, I answer, first, that, had my object been profit, I should have printed

* The eighteen-penny edition of the *Spirit of Despotism* I sold to Mr. Walling, 409, Strand, (next the Adelphi Theatre,) of whom it may still be had.

Before the publication of the *Spirit of Despotism*, I was not aware that it was written by Dr. Vicesimus Knox, with whom I afterwards had an interview on the subject. His reasons for suppressing the book originally are related in my preface to a superior edition, which I recently published, in an octavo volume, that it might take its place among our standard literature.

it in an imposing volume ; secondly, that I never speculated in any thing opposed to my own sentiments ; thirdly, that I view those who oppose Christianity as opposed to an indestructible scheme of happiness, which in its beneficent progress embraces individuals, and in its final accomplishment will include the whole human race ; and, fourthly, that I regard Christianity, not as a patent of privilege to a few, but a grant to all—as the Great Charter of mankind, defining all rights ; prescribing all duties ; prohibiting all wrong ; proscribing all violence. Upon it every thing that is beneficial or permanent in society is founded : without it, the advocates and supporters of public liberty can neither attain nor maintain what they have.

I was brought up in religious habits, but these are surfaces, not principles. They were worn off by circumstances in early youth, when “chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy” I wondered at the world and at myself, and theory after theory arose as the waves, weltering and disappearing. Ardently seeking for truth, I conversed with books rather than men, and hewed out principles as I could, “here a little and there a little.” It is said, that “many persons commence religious at first, they don’t know why, and with a blind zeal persist in a religion which is they know not what.”* I am not among that number ; for it was by patient research and painful process, that I arrived at that clear evidence for the truth of Christianity, which, if sincerely and diligently sought, is found to be irresistible. My religion is the religion of the New Testament. As taught and exemplified by Christ himself, it is the perfection of all knowledge, “which is, and which was, and which is to come.” It is infinite wisdom. It is a pure principle, a mental illumination, which, however dimmed by the cares and conflicts of the world, shines out

* Jones on the Canon, vol. i. p. 14.

in the solitude of the closet, when the eye turns inward. As regards conduct in life, it is the being held in a bond to do justice, love mercy, and practise universal charity. There is no release from this obligation, though the disregard of it is a stumbling-block to thousands, whose conceptions of Christianity, being derived from the uncharitableness of nominal Christians, disincline them to explore the springs from whence vindictiveness and persecution seem to flow. In the words of Erasmus, "Christian charity extends itself to all; and he that does no hurt to any body though he be bad, and would rejoice if he would grow better, in my opinion, loves all as becomes a Christian to do."

But it is time to conclude. My wish to be understood has occasioned some of my statements to seem long, yet, from desire to be brief, much of reflection has been withheld. I have been as temperate as I could, but, whether as temperate as I ought, others must determine. The remarks concerning Mr. Archdeacon Butler and Mr. Rennell are in correction of their misconceptions, not in violation of their feelings. I by no means class these gentlemen with the Quarterly reviewer; concerning whom, "if what has been strongly felt has been strongly expressed, and if, before the occasional warmth of my language be challenged, the violence and injustice which I have to repel be examined, I shall not, in this instance at least, be alarmed at the result."* To have forbore from writing altogether, would have been agreeable to me; but when a sort of exultation is manifested, as though I had nothing to say, I am not willing that a false and insolent triumph should be accorded to the Quarterly reviewer at my expence. If his arts succeeded in deceiving the credulous, they are now exposed; and they who will blame me for not having done this sooner, may perhaps regret, that they had not exercised a little discrimination before they so readily pro-

* Mr. Gifford's Life of Jonson, p. ccxlv.

nounced against me. Believing that part of his frauds would be as apparent to others as all of them were to me, I little suspected that his loud summons to surrender would frighten men out of the use of their faculties. On sitting down to the volume on *Mysteries*, I relinquished the purpose I have here resumed and executed, and destroyed the memoranda I originally made relating to it. Yet I am persuaded that there is enough on these pages to accomplish my object; and that, when the whereabouts of my existence shall be inquired of, not one act I have done will be alleged, nor will a person who knew me be able to testify, in behalf of the representations I have here sought to refute. Then some will stand forth as witnesses to my having possessed qualities that they denied me while I lived, and others be forced to confess their ignorance of my character when they wantonly aspersed it.

THE END.

III.

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